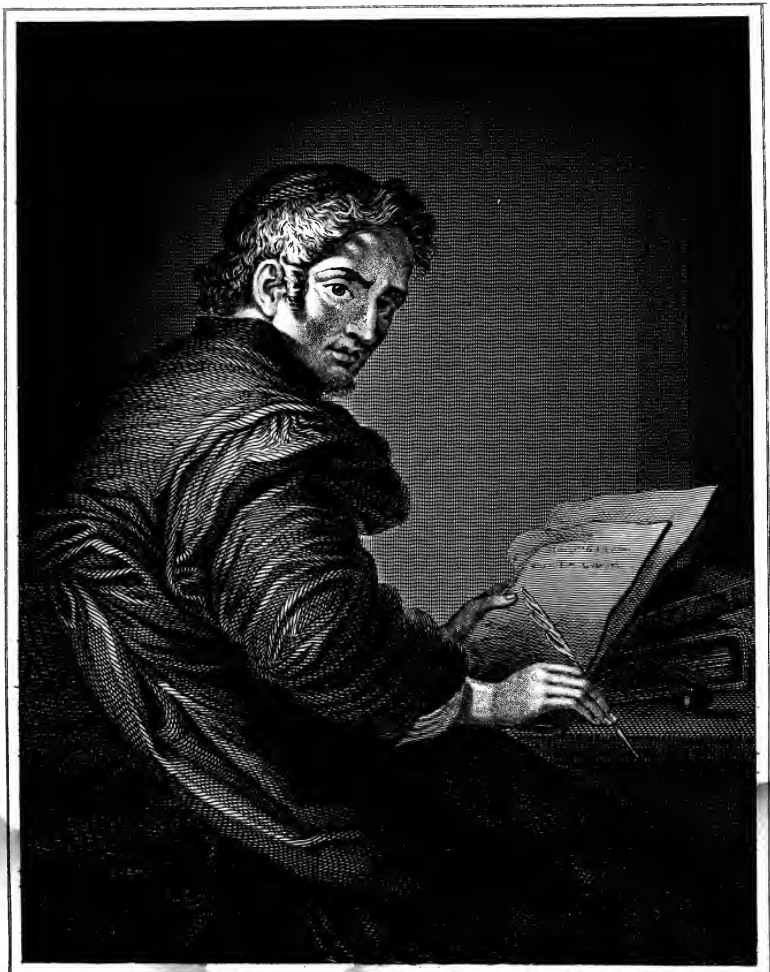




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Salvator Rosa Pinx.

R. Cooper sculp. 9, Prater Place, Camden Town.

SALVATOR ROSA,
*From the Original Painting
in the possession of The Marquis of Westminster.*

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THE
LIFE AND TIMES
OF
SALVATOR ROSA.

BY
LADY MORGAN,
AUTHOR OF "O'DONNELL," "FLORENCE MACARTHY," "BOOK OF THE BOUDOIR,"
"BOOK WITHOUT A NAME," "FRANCE IN 1818—1830," "ITALY,"
ETC. ETC.

One whom no servile hope of gain, or frosty apprehension of danger, can
make a parasite either to time, place, or opinion.—*Ben Jonson.*

Famoso pittore delle cose morali.—*Il Duca di Salviati.*

New Edition.

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1855.

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PROVO, UTAH

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

It is the desire of the Publisher of this new edition of my Works, that I should prefix a few introductory lines to the first volume of the Series, "The Life and Times of Salvator Rosa." But the great Artist will speak best for himself to the present generation, as he has done to so many others in the course of those two centuries of his triumphs which have swept on to

"The years beyond the flood."

Painter, Poet, Musician, Philosopher, and Patriot, he combined in his fine organisation the supreme elements of high art, with the noblest instincts of intellectual humanity. He worked through his great vocation with a spirit of independence that never quailed, and with unflinching resistance to the persecutions of despotism and the intrigues of professional rivalry. His moral dignity refused to pander to the licentious tastes of the profligate times in which he flourished, and, in this respect superior to many of his great predecessors, he left not one picture that,

"—dying, he might blush to own,"

while he exhibited in his great historical compositions, "The Death of Regulus" and "The Conspiracy of Catiline," a graphic eloquence which Herodotus and Gibbon have scarcely surpassed.

The story of Modern Italy writhing under foreign rule, he depicted in those groups of outlawed gentlemen and an

outraged people, ~~who~~, being denied all law, lived lawlessly, and, driven into crime by necessity, peopled the savage scenery of the Abruzzi, or sought refuge in the caves of Calabria, where Salvator found and painted them, as the moral results of political misrule. But these *fuori citti*, these *condottieri* of romantic history, whose graceful forms and noble bearing bespoke their high caste, natural and social, were capable of chivalrous deeds and generous sympathies,—unlike those banded serfs of modern warfare, of low instinct and Tartar aspect, who, with “the sword in their hands, and the cross in their hearts,” strike down their foe to murder him at leisure, as palpitating life moves one muscle more to impede the plunder of some bosom gem, the gift of love or maternal affection.

As the poet of liberty, Salvator takes his place among the high priests of her altars in Italy—Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, Filicaja. He rendered even philosophy familiar to the eye, when, by the double despotism of Church and State, its truths were prohibited from meeting the understanding; and while Galileo was condemned to death for proving that the earth moved, Salvator, unsuspected and unpunished, painted, in allegories of artistic excellence, theories at least as dangerous.

Did Salvator live now, one might fancy him joining the ranks of the gallant defenders of national independence and civilisation; standing out, like one of his own bold figures, upon the heights of Balaklava, pencil in hand and revolver in belt, realising for the homage of posterity the grand battle raging below, till, borne away by his kindling sympathies, he flings down his pencil, and, plunging into the *mêlée*, meets a glorious death or shares a not less glorious triumph.

With respect to the Authorship of the “Life of Salvator Rosa,” it was written *con amore* in the prime of the Author’s life, and of her enthusiasm for Italy.

Of the principle which animates it, time has not "bated one jot," nor quenched one sympathy.

The style in which it was written may now, perhaps, be deemed *rococo*, by the censors of the modern free-and-easy school, who write that those who *run* may *read*. Such as it is, it was the style with which the Author won her spurs, under the command of Field Marshal "O'Donnel" and other heroes, native and foreign, who "championed" to their utmost the sublime cause of right and their country's independence. If, however, with the conceit of other veterans, she now

"Shoulders *her* crutch and shows how fields were won,"

she pleads that she served, though only as a subaltern, in times of the greatest literary enterprise and mental competitorship that British genius ever produced since the Augustan ages of Elizabeth and Anne!

SYDNEY MORGAN.

London, William Street, Albert Gate,
10th Jan., 1855.



PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

SHOULD it be deemed worthy of inquiry, why I selected the life of Salvator Rosa as a subject of biographical memoir, in preference to that of any other illustrious painter of the Italian Schools, I answer, that I was influenced in my preference more by the peculiar character of the man, than the extraordinary merits of the artist. For, admiring the works of the great Neapolitan master, with an enthusiasm unknown, perhaps, to the sobriety of professed virtù, I estimated still more highly the qualities of the Italian patriot, who, stepping boldly in advance of a degraded age, stood in the foreground of his times, like one of his own spirited and graceful figures, when all around him was timid mannerism and grovelling subserviency!

Struck, as I had always been, with the philosophical tone and poetical conception of Salvator's greater pictures, even to the feeling a degree of personal interest in favour of their creator, I took the opportunity of my residence in Italy to make some verbal inquiries as to the private character and story of a man, whose powerful intellect and deep feeling, no less than his wild and gloomy imagination, came forth even in his most petulant sketches and careless designs.

From tradition, little is to be obtained in a land where it is equally perilous to indulge in the memory of the past, or the hope of the future: but it was also evident, that over the name of Salvator Rosa there hung some spell, dark as one of his own incantations. For though in answer to my applications on this subject I was, in one or two instances, referred for information to the Parnasso Italiano, in none

was I directed to those contemporary sources from whence the most impartial accounts were to be derived. The *Par-nasso Italiano* is one of the few modern works in Italy sanctioned by the constituted authorities, and published, as its licence asserts, "with the full approbation of the Grand Inquisitor of the Holy Office." In its consecrated pages I found *Salvator Rosa* described as being "of low birth and indigent circumstances—of a subtle organisation and an unregulated mind;—one whose life had been disorderly, and whose associates had been chosen among musicians and buffoons." This discrepancy between the man and his works, though authenticated by the seal of the "Holy Office," awakened suspicions, which led to further inquiry and deeper research. It was then I discovered, that the sublime painter of the *Saul* and the *Job* was in fact precisely the reverse, in life and character, of all that he had been represented by the hired literary agents of those bad institutions, which he had so boldly and so ably attacked both by his pencil and his pen; for he was not "subtile," but uncompromising; not "unregulated," but concentrated; not "one living with buffoons," but with sages. It was equally evident, that the cause which covered the memory of one of the greatest painters and most philosophical poets of Italy with obloquy, was not the vice of the man, but the moral independence and political principle of the patriot! I found *Salvator Rosa* standing in the gap of time between *Michael Angelo* the patriot artist, and *Filicaja* the poet of Liberty. The inheritor of much of the genius and all the good old Italian spirit of the first, he was also the precursor of the political free breathings of the last,—compared to whom he appears, like his own *Desert-prophet* in the *Colonna* palace, lonely indeed and wild, but not uninspired. As I found, so have I represented him; and if (led by a natural sympathy to make common cause with all who suffer by misrepresentation) I have been the first (my only merit) to light a taper at the long-neglected shrine, and to raise the veil of calumny from the splendid image of slandered genius, I trust it is still reserved for some compatriot hand to restore the memory of *Salvator Rosa* to all its "original brightness," as when the muse of the *Arno* was exclusively occupied in singing his praises. Many minute details and interesting facts of this extraordinary

man may yet doubtless be obtained by a native of Italy, which it was difficult or impossible for a foreigner, and one writing at so remote a distance, to procure. The verbal information which I have extorted, has been in truth but scanty. Of the number of distinguished friends I had made and left in that country (the lustre of whose blue skies has not yet faded from my imagination), few now reside there, and fewer still are in a situation to give me any assistance. Many have been condemned to death! the greatest number have saved life by perilous evasion and indigent exile; and some, at the moment I write, uncertain of their fate, are wearing out their prime of existence in solitary confinement, cut off from all human intercourse, save what they hold (if that may be called human) with their gaolers and inquisitors.

From the general intimidation which prevails throughout Italy, little was to be hoped from the contributions of mere acquaintances. The proscription of my work on that country by the King of Sardinia, the Emperor of Austria, and the Pope, rendered it dangerous even to receive my letters or to answer them.* An English lady of high rank and unbounded influence in Rome, who, in any other cause but in that of two such notorious Carbonari, must have been eminently successful, exerted herself to the utmost for me and my Salvator; all, however, that her inexhaustible kindness (for such it has been) could effect, was to procure me a catalogue of Salvator's pictures now remaining in Rome, and in this catalogue the "Prometheus" (one of the most celebrated) was omitted. By far the greater number of Salvator's works are in Great Britain; and from many of their possessors and other lovers of the arts, I have received information wherever I have applied for it. I beg more particularly to offer my acknowledgments to the Earl of Darnley, Earl Grosvenor, Earl Cowper, Earl of Miltown, the Honourable William Ponsonby, Richard Power, Esq., General Cockburn, Weld Hartstrong, Esq., — Heley, Esq., her Grace the Duchess of

* The Count Gonfaloniere and Sylvio Pellico, the most illustrious victims of Austrian tyranny, were at this epoch *in carcere duro* in the dungeons of Spilsburgh, from whence, after twenty years' confinement, they were released under a total depression of intellect.

Devonshire, the Marchioness Dowager of Lansdowne, and to the Baron Denon. I now dismiss my first attempt at biographical writing with more of hope than apprehension ; and commit it to the indulgence of that public, which is the sole umpire for whose suffrage an author should be solicitous, as it is the only tribunal from whose decision there is no appeal.

SYDNEY MORGAN.

Kildare-street,
Dublin, October 1st, 1823.

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THE
LIFE AND TIMES
OF
SALVATOR ROSA.

CHAPTER I.

THE perfection attained in the art of painting during the middle ages, had its source in the political combinations of times when a predominant hierarchy held the ascendant, and the Church was—the State.

Knowledge, which is supremacy as long only as it is a monopoly, was then the exclusive possession of the clergy; and the intellectual disparity, which existed between the many and the few, long continued to be the instrument of delusions, of which ignorance inevitably becomes the dupe and the victim.

To support the powerful system of priestly domination, which for ages governed the nations of Europe and their rulers, the efforts of human intellect and the products of human genius were discarded or brought forward, as the exigencies of successive epochs dictated. The same hierarchy which, at one period, found its account in burning the works of Cicero, and casting the statues of Praxiteles into the Tiber,* in another, restored the philosophy of Aristotle,

* Under Gregory (the first pope and saint) surnamed the Great. The hatred of this pontiff against the ancient religion of Rome was so fierce, and his desire to destroy all remembrance of it so ardent, that he is accused of having reduced to ashes the Palatine Library collected by Augustus Cæsar, and of having thrown the most precious works of antiquity into the Tiber. This policy, though barbarous, was expedient for the day—the sixth century.

and proposed the elevation of Raphael to the dignity of the cardinalate.

The splendid architecture and elegant decorations of the pagan temples of Greece and Rome had been rejected by the nascent Church, as recalling, through their associations, the doctrines and practices of that brilliant religion, which it was the interest of its sterner successor to bury in oblivion. But, when the rude monstrosities pictured on the walls of the ancient ecclesiastical edifices of Lombardy, and the unavailing crusades of the Iconoclasts against the imaginative tendencies of the Italians, exhibited the innate impulse of the people towards decoration, the Church, taught by experimental demonstration the difficulty of securing faith by abstractions, or of satisfying the passions with invisible objects of adoration, wisely enlisted the arts in her service.

Painting (which, in the progress of civilization, precedes music,* as being less abstracted in its principles, and more tangible in its effects) was, even as early as the thirteenth century, adopted by the Church as a means of riveting her power, by bringing over the senses to her interest. Its effects were magical: it personified the essence which thought could not reach; it depicted the mystery which reason could not explain; it revealed the beatitudes of Heaven, and the punishments of Hell, in imagery which struck upon the dullest apprehensions and intimidated the hardest conscience; and the Madonnas of Cimabue† and the saints of Giotto‡ were found to be no less influential in their calling, than the councils of the assembled Church and the

* The study and elaborate combinations required in the perfection of music as a science can never belong to barbarous times. The works of Memmi and Martini, the portrait-painters, are still extant, while the vocal music of Petrarch's age is wholly lost. "The expression of music," says Dr. Burney, "in so remote a period is so entirely lost, that, like a dead language, no one is certain how it is pronounced. Petrarch and Boccaccio were both celebrated players on the lute; but the music of much more recent times sounds monotonous and barbarous to modern ears."

† The people of Florence were so struck by the Madonna of Cimabue, that the picture was carried in procession, with sound of trumpet, to the church of Santa Maria Novella, where it may still be seen in the chapel de' Rucellai. The same painting gave the name of Borgo Allegro (pleasant town) to the little village in which it was painted.

‡ Giotto, the friend and portrait-painter of Dante, was courted and employed by all the pontiffs and pious princes of his day; particularly by

bulls of the Lateran. Eyes, which shed no tears over the recited sufferings of the Saviour, wept gratefully over the pictured agonies of a self-sacrificed Mediator; and stubborn knees, unused to bend in mental devotion, dropped involuntarily before shrines where a fair young mother and her blooming offspring, a virgin parent and an infant God, awakened religious adoration through human sympathies.

The doctrines of a mystic creed thus enforced through palpable forms addressed to the affections, powerfully assisted to awaken faith through feeling; for that which is felt, it is difficult to doubt, and that which satisfies the senses, is vainly distrusted by the understanding.

The people likewise, denied the use of the Scriptures, were now taught much of what it was expedient they should know, from pictures. The art, in process of time, became an acknowledged state-engine; and the artists, virtually, if not nominally, acting as ministers, were soon subsidised as allies.*

In Italy a public taste inevitably sprang from this political expediency; and habits of long-practised judgment and well-exercised discrimination produced the singular phenomenon of a nation of virtuosi. Towards the commencement of the sixteenth century the Roman and Tuscan people had become, with respect to painting, what the lowest of the Athenians had once been with respect to language! The orators of a free government had made a nation of philologists; a church despotism had created a population of dilettanti. For governments, in particular stages of society, make the people: in others, the people make the governments.

While the natives of a country, which once fought for

Clement the Fifth, and King Robert of Naples. Dante's well-known lines

“Credette Cimabue nella pittura

Tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido,” &c.

brought him still more into fashion. In another age Giotto might have been the protector of Dante; for the Church soon discovered that artists were less likely to paint heresy than such poets and philosophers as Dante and Petrarch to preach it.

* Raphael was offered a cardinal's hat, and Pope Giulio was the friend, and almost the slave, of Michael Angelo. Leo the Tenth courted the aid and suffrages of all the artists of his day, whom he flattered, however, more than he rewarded. In latter times painters presided in cabinets and were appointed to embassies. Rubens supported a high diplomatic character.

the mastery of the world, were occupied with an art to which all pretended, the munificent merchants of the Italian republics entered into competition with popes and princes; and if they could not outbid such sumptuous competitors, they at least assisted in raising the price of the precious commodities. Thus, from the period when poetry held the ascendant in the persons of Dante and Petrarch, to the birth of philosophy in the cradle of Galileo, the rich rewards of genius flowed exclusively in one channel, and were lavished on those great painters and sculptors, whose works, while they beautified churches and embellished shrines, contributed to extend a system that rejected no ally however feeble, nor refused any support however incongruous.

The great poets of the sixteenth century were forced to woo their patrons; the painters were to be courted, and were rarely won unsought. The immortal creators of the "Jerusalem" and the "Orlando" waited despondingly in the antechambers of the pitiful D'Este, while Vinci took his place in the saloons of kings, and Titian rejected the invitations of Emperors.* The spirit of the times directing, as it always will, the genius of individuals, tied down the most enlightened people of the world to the pursuit of an ornamental art. Under other circumstances, and in another age, Raphael might have been no less "divine" as a poet, than as a painter;† and Leonardo might have shone the first of experimental philosophers, as he was the most eminent of artists.

In the progress of society new combinations effected new results. The Clements, the Giulios, the Leos,‡ the Leonardos, the Raphaels, and the Michael Angelos,—with the glorious republics of Italy, whose free institutions had tended so powerfully to the development of genius,—all vanished from the scene; and towards the close of the

* Leonardo da Vinci was the guest of Francis the First, and died in his arms at Fontainebleau. Titian refused the special invitations of Charles the Fifth, and of Philip the Second, his son.

† The little that has reached posterity of Raphael's poetry is quite as ethereal as his heads of female saints.

‡ There is nothing so different as the characters and policy of these stormy and warlike pontifical statesmen, and those of their successors in the seventeenth century, who reigned temporally and spiritually by what Cardinal de Retz calls "*les finoteries du Vatican.*"

sixteenth century new interests and new wants arose, which occasioned new adaptations of human ingenuity. The Reformation came—the greatest event of modern times. It was the policy of the new religion to carry on her system by a stern rejection of all the meretricious means by which the old church had effected her scheme of usurpation. She wanted no pictures, and patronized no artists.* Equally bent upon supremacy as her great predecessor, she called in new aids to accomplish her ends; she affected to engage reason on her side, and to found faith on proof. But more bent on her object, than considerate of her means, she discarded too little or too much; and did not foresee that reason, usurping the territory it was called in to defend, would eventually throw light on the retained abuses, as it had upon those rejected. In discarding the arts and preserving the tithes, the reformed church at once loosened her strongest hold on the imagination, and armed the more calculating passions against her.

Philosophy, meanwhile, leaving reform to its struggles, and theology to its sophisms, availed herself of the licence of the times, and of the inquiring spirit of the age. She came forth with her great experimental truths to better the condition of humanity, to lessen its inflictions, to meet its

* Among the votes passed in the Parliament of 1636, were two sufficiently singular, exceeding even the persecution of the arts by the first Protestant Reformers. “Ordered, that all such pictures there (in the royal collection) as shall have the representation of the second person of the Trinity on them, shall be forthwith burnt; that all such pictures as have the representation of the Virgin Mary upon them, shall be forthwith burnt.” The pictures without any superstition upon them were sold for the benefit of the poor Irish!!—See *Journal of the House of Commons*.

The destruction of pictures during the first heat of the Revolution, was in some measure political as well as religious; being a counter-blow to that taste for the Fine Arts, which Charles had endeavoured to render national, to the neglect of better things. Luther, the least rigid of all reformers, retaining some of the old tastes of the Augustan monk, struggled against a barbarous and indiscriminate attack on the arts. On the idolatrous subject of pictures he dared not interfere (though vastly fond of multiplying his own portrait and that of his “very ugly wife”), but he stickled hard for a little music in his church. Being himself a composer, and the best singer in the choir at Erfurt, he confessed that he “prized music above all sciences except theology,” and even went so far as to compose his catechism in verse that he might set it to music. The famous Confession of Augsburg was actually done into a metrical ballad. Calvin, however, who had “no music in his soul,” waged war on all the arts, and declared even playing on the organ “a foolish vanity.”

wants, and to diminish the many "ills which flesh is heir to." Her object was the happiness of mankind; and her agent, knowledge. Obstructed in every step of her progress,—condemned as infidel, for expounding the laws of nature,—and persecuted for truths, for which she deserved to be deified, still she advanced—slowly indeed, but firmly: moral and physical evil, error and disease, bigotry and the plague, receded before her luminous progress. Philosophers, it is true, perished in the dungeons of inquisitions, or fed the flames of an *auto da fé*; but philosophy survived, and triumphed. Not so the art, which had so long made a part and parcel of the church and state legislature of Christendom.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the great market for painting was closing, never again to be opened with equal splendour, save under the pressure of exigencies, vast, influential, and incorporated with the interests of society, as those in which the prosperity and perfection of the art had originated. The grand historical and epic masters of the splendid schools of Rome, Tuscany, and Lombardy, the schools of Raphael, of Da Vinci, and of the Caracci, were now replaced by the well-named "Dependenti" of cardinals, by the court limners of the Bourbons, and the "sergeant payntors" of the Stuarts,—the subservient decorators of the Escorial, the Tuileries, and Whitehall.* The system of politics, which, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, drove nearly all Europe to the

* See the melancholy letter of Nicholas Poussin on the subject of his degrading residence in the French Court, and his eagerness to get back to Rome and escape from the royal patronage of the Louvre. Albano, though reduced to misery in his own country, in the true spirit of the old Italian masters refused the invitation of Charles the First of England, though conveyed in a royal autograph. Carlo Maratti rejected a similar proposal from the first great Duke of Buckingham, who had adopted his master's passion for the arts. By the by, it is curious to observe in Vertue's Catalogue of the pictures of Charles the First, that three-fourths were presents from his courtiers; so that his encouragement of the arts was much at the expense of parasites, or such as expected a place for a picture.

The reluctance of the Italian masters to embrace the servitude of the ultra-montane courts arose from the fate of some of their special protégés. Vanderdort was in such awe of his patron, Charles the First, that he hanged himself in despair, for having mislaid a miniature by Gibson, which the King called for, and which was found after his death. The conduct of Louis the Fourteenth to the unfortunate Petitot is notorious.—See *Walpole's Painters*, p. 258.

hazardous experiment of revolution, had its influence on the arts, and assisted with other causes to degrade its professors. It was in vain that such names as Rubens, Pousin, and Vandyke, illustrated and almost redeemed the list of court painters of this degraded epoch. Even the brilliant genius of such men submitted to the influence of the times; and an eternal series of hatchet-faced kings and flaxen-wigged queens, with all their allegorical virtues,—unreal as the monsters by which they were represented,—afford a running commentary on the dictation imposed on the art, and on the influence exercised by the presuming patronage and the overweening conceit of princely pretenders.

Royal vanity, which, like “self-love, loves portraits,”* circumscribed those talents which should have belonged to ages and to nations, within the narrow limits of Blackfriars† and the Louvre. It was in vain that state-ministers created academies, that state-mistresses awarded prizes, that orders were conferred and pensions were granted. Still, “with all appliances and means to boot,” the genius of painting sunk beneath such distinctions. The secret and the importance of the art were lost toge-

* “L’amour propre aime les portraits.” *La Bruyere*.—Of this axiom, Queen Elizabeth, Charles the First, and Louis the Fourteenth, give the most striking illustrations. Queen Elizabeth made it penal to buy an ugly picture, and *déce majesté* for a limner not to flatter her. She is generally represented with all the attributes of royal power and sovereign beauty, while Junos, Venuses, and Minervas fly before her to hide their diminished heads where they may. Charles the First’s melancholy visage is to be seen in every collection in Europe, from the numberless portraits which filled his own gallery, the contents of which were so dispersed. He made Rembrandt paint him as Saint George; and Vandyke and others painted him under the form of every saint in the Calendar. Louis the Fourteenth, on the contrary, flourishes on the walls and ceilings of Versailles and of the Tuileries as Jupiter or Apollo, surrounded by his mistresses as the Graces; while the Virtues are oddly enough allegorized as monsters. Still, in all these portraits, there is much of the “human face divine;” but what will posterity say to the pictures of some of the “Singes tigres” of reigning dynasties?—those of Sardinia and Naples, for instance?—or even of the portraits of the “Hun, the Goth, and the Calmuc,” as inseparably connected as Brown, Jones, and Robinson, (the heroes of “Reading made easy,”) and henceforward to be designated in history as the “Three Gentlemen of Verona?”

† Vandyke, when he arrived in England, was lodged among the King’s artists at Blackfriars, whither the King frequently came, bespeaking pictures of the Queen, his children, and his courtiers.

ther.* The fires which had warmed the soul of Michael Angelo under the dome of the Vatican, were quenched; the zeal which led the pilgrim steps of the Caracci and their disciples † to Rome and Naples, was no more; and, towards the end of the seventeenth century, that long list of illustrious masters, who, by their mighty genius and lofty spirits, had raised the art to its highest excellence, and given dignity to the profession, was closed for ever, and terminated in the person of one, well worthy of the splendid but melancholy pre-eminence,—one who, distinguished above all his predecessors as the

“Famoso pittore delle cose morali,”

has still been more celebrated than known, by the name of SALVATOR ROSA.‡

CHAPTER II.

THE seventeenth century, an age so big with events, so important in its influence on the rest of Europe, was to Italy an epoch of degradation and disgraceful ruin. It laid her prostrate before the House of Austria, and submitted her to the tyranny of that fatal race, whose dull but dire policy, like the juice of the herb that kills silently,§ has

* Portrait-painting, as a distinct branch of the art, only began with the commencement of the seventeenth century, when the name of “*ritrattisti*” was given to the Italian limners of that day. “Till we have other pictures than portraits (says H. Walpole), and painting has ampler fields to range in than private apartments, it is in vain to expect that the arts will recover their genuine lustre.” Kneller, the last eminent name given to the arts before that barbarous interval which occurred in England between his day and that of Sir J. Reynolds, had turned the *profession* into a *trade*. Such men, where they offered one picture to fame, sacrificed twenty to lucre, and lessened their own reputation, by making it subservient to their fortunes.

† Dominichino, Guido, Lanfranco, &c. &c.

‡ The Flemish school, which succeeded to the Italian, was comparatively but of short duration. It opened and closed within a century. From Cimabue, the founder of the Italian school, to Carlo Maratti and Salvator Rosa, who were esteemed the *last of its masters*, there is included a space of nearly five centuries.

§ The Indian Cuvare, or poison of Guiana.

ever been to destroy by numbing ;—a race which, in treading on the natural and political rights of those subjected to its leaden sway, has even retrograded civilization, by palsying intellect, and checked the progress of science, by interdicting all freedom of discussion and play of thought, to the uttermost limits of its bayonets and its tribunals and its dungeons.*

From the time of Charles the Fifth, the balance of Europe leaned towards the house of Hapsburg. Masters of Spain, of Portugal, and South America, of Bohemia, Hungary, and Germany,—of the whole of the North of Italy and the kingdom of the Two Sicilies,—the descendants of the Emperor and King would inevitably have subdued all Europe to their rule, and have realized the scheme of universal empire, but that their dulness perpetually marred their luck.† The division of the empire at the death of Charles the Fifth was the first blow to their supremacy. On this occasion Spain fell to the elder branch, in the person of the atrocious Philip the Second.‡ The dark temperament of this proverbial tyrant, and of his immediate successors, directed their unlimited power to the utter ruin of liberty wherever it appeared ; and their enormous wealth enabled them to succeed in the attempt, wherever public men were corruptible. Spain, with all her chivalrous spirit and old Castilian pride, was crushed beneath the horrible weight of the Inquisition, which Austrian rulers had established in the heart of her ancient capital. The Low Countries, maddened by oppression into insurrection, had resisted in vain, and were governed by the faggot and the sword : while the beautiful kingdom of Naples, the brightest gem in the Austro-Spanish diadem, became to Spain, what Ireland

* The crusade against mind was so fiercely carried on in Italy at this time, that even the Medici could not protect their friend Marchetti from the Inquisition, whose vengeance, under the Austro-Spanish influence, was roused by that writer's translation of Lucretius, which Cosmo the Third was obliged to suppress.

† “ Si tant d'états avaient été réunis sous un seul chef de cette maison, il est à croire que l'Europe lui aurait enfin été asservie.”—*Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV.*

‡ “ L'Espagne, gouvernée par la branche aînée de la maison d'Autriche, avait imprimé après la mort de Charles Quint plus de terreur que la nation Germanique. Les Rois d'Espagne étaient incomparablement plus absolus et plus riches.”—*Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV.*

was to England,—a suffering, degraded, and barbarized province.

Under Philip the Fourth and his sordid and oppressive viceroys, the natural fertility and internal riches of Naples were insufficient to supply the rapine and cupidity of a government upheld by violence and conducted by fraud. Its cities were depopulated to feed the armies of its remote tyrants, and their inhabitants marched to far distant countries to fight in battles wholly unconnected with the national interests. Its territory was drained of its wealth, and the industry of its people was alienated, to replenish the treasury of the mother-country. Still, however, tyranny could not cloud the Neapolitan sun, nor deform the fair face of nature. "Man was the only growth that withered there;" and Naples, with its classical sites, was not less romantically lovely and wildly picturesque, than it now appears to the modern traveller's gaze, when, in the midst of its moral and political degradation, it still looks like "a part of heaven dropped on earth."

The sweeping semicircle which the most fantastic and singular city of Naples marks on the shore of its unrivalled bay, from the Capo di Pausilippo to the Torrione del Carmine, is dominated by a lofty chain of undulating hills, which take their distinctive appellations from some local peculiarity, or classical tradition. The high and insulated rock of St. Elmo, which overtops the whole, is crowned by that terrible fortress to which it gives its name,—a fearful and impregnable citadel, that, since the first moment when it was raised by an Austrian conqueror,* to the present day, when it is garrisoned by a Bourbon with Austrian troops, has poured down the thunder of its artillery to support the violence, or proclaim the triumphs,

* Charles the Fifth. The natives of free states who have not visited the Continent, cannot judge of the horrors of these strong holds of unlimitèd despotism. It is supposed that the subterranean passages of St. Elmo, "stained with many a midnight murder," communicate with the Castello Nuovo in the city beneath, and that, like the terrible labyrinths of the catacombs which open into them, their mysterious intricacies escape the research of all, save those who have a fearful interest in preserving the clue to these living tombs; where, from age to age, the bravest and the best have perished in *carcere duro* (as it is called in the jargon of modern Italian tribunals), better known as the terrific *au secret* of the French police.

of foreign interference over the rights and liberties of a long-suffering and oft-resisting people.

Swelling from the base of the savage St. Elmo, smile the lovely heights of San Martino, where, through chesnut woods and vineyards, gleam the golden spires of the monastic palace of the Monks of the Certosa.* A defile cut through the rocks of the Monte Donzelle, and shaded by the dark pines which spring from their crevices, forms an umbrageous pathway from the superb convent to the Borgo di Renella, the little capital of a neighbouring hill, which, for the peculiar beauty of its position and the views it commands, is still called "the pleasant village." At night, the fires of Vesuvius almost bronze the humble edifices of Renella; and the morning sun, as it rises, discovers from various points the hills of Vomiro and Pausilippo, the shores of Puzzuolo and of Baiæ, the islets of Nisiti, Capri, and Procida, till the view fades into the extreme verge of the horizon, where the waters of the Mediterranean seem to mingle with those clear skies, whose tint and lustre they reflect.

In this true "nido paterno" of genius there dwelt, in the year 1615, an humble and industrious artist called Vito Antonio Rosa,—a name even then not unknown to the arts, though as yet more known than prosperous. Its actual possessor, the worthy Messire Antonio, had up to this time struggled, with his good wife Giulia Grecca and two daughters still in childhood, to maintain the ancient respectability of his family. Antonio was an architect and land-surveyor of some note, but of little gains; and if over the old architectural portico of the Casaccia† of Renella might be read—

"Vito Antonio Rosa, Agremensore ed Architetto,"‡

the intimation was given in vain! Few passed through

* The pavilions of the Caliphs of Bagdad were not so deliciously placed, nor so sumptuously raised, as this retreat of the self-denying brotherhood of the Certosa. It was founded in the fourteenth century by Charles, son of Robert of Arragon, King of Naples.

† Every Italian village has its Casaccia (literally, the great but ugly house), the dilapidated palace or villa of some former lord of the district, which in process of time falls to the lot of decayed gentility, or of struggling indigence. Nothing can be more desolate than the Casaccia.

‡ "Mediocre Architetto," says Passeri.

the decayed Borgo of Renella, and still fewer, in times so fearful, were able to profit by the talents and profession which the inscription advertised. The family of Rosa, inconsiderable as it was, partook of the pressure of the times; and the pretty Borgo, like its adjacent scenery, (no longer the haunt of Consular voluptuaries,—neither frequented by the great nor visited by the curious,) stood lonely and beautiful,—unencumbered by those fantastic *belvideras* and grotesque pavilions, which in modern times rather deform than beautify a site, for which Nature has done all, and Art can do nothing.

The cells of the Certosa, indeed, had their usual complement of lazy monks and lay brothers. The fortress of St. Elmo then, as now, manned by Austrian troops, glittered with foreign pikes. The cross rose on every acclivity, and the sword guarded every pass; but the villages of Renella, San Martino, of the Vomiro, and of Pausilippo, were thinned of their inhabitants to recruit foreign armies; and this earthly paradise was dreary as the desert, and silent as the tomb.

The Neapolitan barons, those restless but brave feudatories, whose resistance to their native despots preserved something of the ancient republican spirit of their Greek predecessors, now fled from the capital. They left its beautiful environs to Spanish viceroys, and to their official underlings; and sullenly shut themselves up in their domestic fortresses of the Abruzzi or of Calabria. “*La Civiltà*,” a class then including the whole of the middle and professional ranks of society of Naples, was struggling for a bare existence in the towns and cities. Beggared by taxation, levied at the will of their despots, and collected with every aggravation of violence, its members lived under the perpetual surveillance of foreign troops and domestic *sbirri*, whose suspicions their brooding discontents were well calculated to nourish.

The people—the debased, degraded people—had reached that maximum of suffering beyond which human endurance cannot go. They were famishing in the midst of plenty, and, in regions the most genial and salubrious, were dying of diseases, the fearful attendants on want. Commerce was at a stand, agriculture was neglected, and the arts, under

the perpetual dictatorship of a Spanish court painter, had no favour but for the followers of *Lo Spagnuololetto*.*

In such times of general distress and oppression, when few had the means or the spirit to build, and still fewer had lands to measure or property to transfer, it is little wonderful that the humble architect and land-surveyor of Renella "was steeped to the very lip in poverty," from which neither talent nor industry could relieve him. Still, however, with few wants and a penurious economy, he had contrived to struggle on with his wife and daughters, in a sort of decent insolvency, when the birth of a son, in the latter end of the year 1615, came to raise the spirits of the family, as an auspicious event. The birth of a male child, among the Neapolitans, to whom female children are always *à charge*, was then, as now, considered a special favour conferred by the tutelar saint of the family. Madonna Giulia had scarcely gotten over her *ricevimento*† (a ceremony in which all the Neapolitan women, not of the lowest rank, indulge,) than she began to consult with the good Messire Antonio on the destiny of their infant child. He, "good easy man," had but one proposition to make: it was, that his son should not be an artist, and, above all, that he should not be a painter; to which Madonna Giulia the more readily agreed, not only because she was herself, like her husband, come of a family of indigent artists,‡ but because, at the very moment of this parental discussion, her brother, Paolo Grecco, was nearly starving in the midst of his pots and palettes in a little workshop in the Strada Seggio del Nido. Paolo Grecco was, in truth, but "pittore assai mediocre," as one of the family chroniclers affirms; and he was chiefly employed (when he had employment), like others in his neighbourhood of the Strada Seggio, in painting family saints and padrona virgins, *as bespoke*.§ From con-

* Giuseppe Ribera, called *Lo Spagnuololetto*, was a native of Spain, but esteemed one of the greatest masters of the Neapolitan school. With respect to the arts in Naples, all influence and patronage centred in his person; and his *seguaci*, or followers, became a powerful faction.

† In Naples, the day after an accouchement, an assembly is held in the bedroom of the convalescent, to which all the gossips of the neighbourhood resort. It is called "a reception."

‡ "E non ostante che ben potesse dirse che gli studii del disegno oramai se fossero fatti proprii di tutto quel parentado (perchè tanto l'avo e'l genitore quanto lo zio materno, con altri suoi antenati erano stati pittori) recusava egli di applicarvi il figliuolo."—*Baldinucci*.

§ Notizie appartenenti alla vita di Salvator Rosa.

current testimony it appears that Madonna Giulia was a devotee of the true Neapolitan cast—full of sanguine and familiar superstition. She saw the hierarchy of heaven, “not as through a smoked glass, but face to face,” could tell the colour of the Virgin’s eyes, the number of St. Peter’s keys, and had a gossiping acquaintance with every saint in the calendar. She wore her spindle in one side of her girdle, and her crucifix in the other, and spun and prayed with equal unction and facility; but, above all, she took no step, either with reference to this life or the next, without a special conference with her confessor and the Madonna. It was, perhaps, under the particular inspiration of both, that she formed the idea, with the consent of the complying Vito Antonio, of devoting their son—their only son—to the Church; or, in the words of the family historian, “alla Lettura;” for none then approached the Muses but in the livery of religion. The Italian poets of that age were at least Abbati; and the councils of the Della Crusca rarely admitted genius that came not duly labelled with the *petit collet*.

The sacred calling of the future Reverendissimo began in the parish church of Renella, where, to secure his salvation by the shortest road to Paradise, he received at the baptismal font that name which was supposed to consecrate its owner to the special protection of Heaven,—the name of SALVATORE. “For never,” says an Italian divine, “has it been known that God has permitted the devil to torture in hell a man who bore this name.”*

Confirmed by the force of their own volition that their son should be a divine, and *should not* be a painter, the good Antonio and Giulia Rosa saw visions of mitres and pontifical crowns floating round the cradle of the little Salvator, and were convinced that they had taken the best means of securing his present and future happiness by devoting him to the Church,—at all times the true temple of fortune in Italy, and at that particular epoch the only safe asylum for one who, by Divine indignation, was born a Neapolitan. It was thus the father of M. Angelo intended him for a woollen-weaver; that the father of Coreggio had destined him for a wood-cutter; that Guido was educated for a musician; Andrea Sartore for a tailor; Guercino for a

* “Che il Signore Iddio avesse permesso al demonio di strapazzare nell’inferno uomo che portasse tal nome.”—*Il Padre Baldovino*.

stone-mason ; Claude Lorraine for a baker ; and Molière for a *marchand frippier*.* The course of genius, like that of

—“true love, seldom does run smooth ;”

but the parental folly which stupidly interferes with nature's vocation is no less sure to expiate its presumption by the disappointment of all its schemes. One curious fact may be added to this general observation, that persons of genius are generally the offspring of ordinary parents, and the sires of ordinary children. Talent is no heir-loom ; and Nature, in selecting *one* of a race as the subject of high endowments, seems to sum up all her forces on a point, and then to recall *her* honours, as kings do theirs ; receiving back from the hands of the son the brilliant distinctions which their favour had conferred on the father.†

The first incident which occurred in the life of Salvator Rosa proved the vanity of all parental calculation. Scarcely had he thrown off the bondage of the “*bambino fasciato*,”‡ and extricated his little limbs from the swathings and bands by which, like other helpless Neapolitan children, he was occasionally hung up behind the door of the old Casaccia, while his pious mother offered her devotions at the golden shrines of the Certosa, than he became the very sprite of the Borgo Renella ; and by his vivacity and gesticulations *alla sua moda Napolitana* lost that holy and protecting appellation, which was to be his pass to futurity, in the vulgarized diminutive of Salvatoriello.

To counteract, however, a nickname of such sorry omen, Antonio and his wife applied themselves with redoubled

* “Tous ceux qui se sont fait un nom dans les beaux arts, les ont cultivés malgré leurs parens, et la nature a été en eux plus forte que l'éducation.”—*Voltaire*.

† If genius, as physiologists suppose, consists in a peculiar development of organs, it may be that Nature, who never rests in her progress, having attained perfection, hurries on to an opposite extreme ; and thus, though both parents should possess the intellectual temperament, the child would only be the more exposed to the vice of excess. In general, however, the offspring is not a pure reflexion of its parents ; but exhibits traces of the peculiarities of remoter relations, and belongs to its race.

‡ These horrible swaddling clothes are still preserved in Italy, and are so protected by Church and State, that the parish priests have been known to reprove mothers who are so jacobinical as to adopt the English manner of dressing infants. They are said to be equally indignant at the introduction of vaccination—in their eyes a blasphemy, if not absolutely sedition.

diligence to their original scheme of education, and sought to give impressions beyond the reach of time, accident, or even nicknames, to efface. They had their son taught to read out of the legends of Santa Caterina di Sienna, made him learn his prayers in Latin, from the "Salve" to the "Regina cœlorum," before he knew any language save his own Neapolitan patois; and, as a penance task upon "a truant disposition" too frequently indulged through life, they even gave him some of the two hundred and thirty questions of Albert le Grand to expound, and to keep him quiet.*

But while the worthy heads of the Casa Rosa were thus taking "the broad way and the sure" to worldly prosperity, conformably with every step of the "social order" of their day, their luckless son was neither instructed nor amused in the progress of his orthodox education. The famous Jean Thauliere (Saint and Doctor) was not more impenetrably dull over his *golden alphabet* than the young Salvatoriello over the two hundred and thirty questions of Albert le Grand, to not one of which, either by any intuitive faculty of divination, or by any process of ratiocination, could he reply. But if he learned nothing, it appears very literally to have been because the subjects presented to his observation were not in accordance with the development of his ideas, or with the sympathies of his age; for, while unmeaning words were passing through his unretentive memory, *things* were impressing themselves on his ardent mind. Even in infancy, Nature—the idol of his matured worship—that Nature which he was born to illustrate in all her splendid aspects,—was speaking to his acute senses, and communicating her imagery in endless associations to

* These questions, which at one time occupied society as being important to salvation, are sufficiently curious; which the following specimens will show:

"Sous quelle forme l'ange lui (à Marie) apparut-il; forme serpentine ou colombine?"

"A quel âge? dans quel habit?"

"Est-ce avec un habit blanc et propre? ou avec un habit noir et crasseux?"

"Si Marie a eu une couleur et un teint qui lui convinrent? Si sa peau a été noire? Quelle a été la couleur de ses cheveux? Si ils ont du être roux ou noirs?"

"Quels ont été ses yeux? S'ils ont été noirs ou bruns?" &c.—*Histoire des Ordres Monastiques.*

his reproductive fancy. Her great volume was spread before him at "all times, all seasons, and their changes;" and while he gave up his young existence to its study and observation, the legends of saints and the history of miracles lay neglected. He appears to have possessed the true temperament of genius, which operated alike in infancy and in age. His fine, subtile, and nervous organization rendered even his childhood curious and inquiring, rapid in the perception of external objects, and prompt in reproducing them by efforts of imitation. The elements of genius were all there; the spirit of passion was yet to give them their definite tendency. The luminous intellect of the future author of the Satires and of the Catiline conspiracy,—the quick and sensitive imagination which, shedding its rays upon the sterile science of ancient counterpoint, was destined to give development to the cantata, and lay the foundations of the rich melodies of Paesiello and of Cimarosa, was already giving out lights through the dim dawn of infancy: and if, to the dull apprehensions of the undiscerning, they seemed "lights which led astray," they were not the less "lights from Heaven."*

Salvator is, in fact, described, even at this early age,† as evincing a disposition towards all the arts, "lispering in numbers," waking the echoes of his native hills with every instrument his infant hand could procure, and producing scraps of antique architecture and of picturesque scenery upon cards and paper, which spoke, "trumpet-tongued," his instinctive and inevitable vocation. To Antonio, however, and to Giulia this was "idless all;" and the wanderings of the young genius served only to give fresh activity to their efforts to impose upon him the destiny which their original plans had chalked out for him; that he should not be a painter, and that he should be "a sage grave man," a pillar of the church, and the Coryphæus of every *accademia* that dulness and pedantry ever presided over.

The cord of paternal authority, thus drawn to its extreme

* "Aveva la natura del piccolo fanciullo già incominciata a scoprire i primi lampi di quell' indole spiritosa di che aveva lo dotato con larga mano."—*Baldinucci, Vita de Salvator Rosa.*

† Pascoli says, "that the mind of Salvator Rosa, even in childhood, was an exhaustless mine of ingenious conceptions (*miniera inesaurita di pellegrini ingegni*), and that he was born no less a poet than a painter."—*"Nato non meno poeta che pittore."*

tension, was naturally snapped. The truant Salvatoriello fled from the restraints of an uncongenial home, from Albert le Grand and Santa Caterina di Sienna, and took shelter among those sites and scenes whose imagery became a part of his own intellectual existence, and were received as impressions long before they were studied as subjects. Sometimes he was discovered by the Padre Cercatore of the convent of Renella among the rocks and caverns of Baiæ, the ruined temples of gods, or the haunts of Sibyls. Sometimes he was found by a gossip of Madonna Giulia, in her pilgrimage to a *maesta*, sleeping among the wastes of the Solfatara, beneath the scorched branches of a blasted tree, his head pillowed by lava, and his dream most probably the vision of an infant poet's slumbers. For even then he was

"the youngest he
That sat in shadow of Apollo's tree,"

seeing Nature with a poet's eye, and sketching her beauties with a painter's hand.*

Chided as a truant, and punished as an idler, he was frequently shut up in the old Casaccia, and destined to expiate his faults by conning his rubric, or learning, under the guidance of his devout mother, the mystery and miracles of the rosary, as related in the legends of the "Chiesa di San Dominico Maggiore" of Naples, where the crucifix may still be seen which addressed St. Thomas Aquinas in the well-known words, "*Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma.*"

The resources of genius, however, are like those of the power from whence they spring, exhaustless! Deprived of liberty, he made propitious offerings to that Nature he was forbidden to worship, within the "darksome rounds" of his domestic prison; and, by the simple instrumentality of some burned sticks, he covered the walls of the old house with the scenery of his favourite haunts. Vesuvius blazed over the faded frescoes of the dilapidated *guarda-roba*; and the old *loggia*, once the temple of aristocratic recreation, when the Casaccia was the palace of some Neapolitan prince, was

* Rosa drew his first inspirations from the magnificent scenery of Pausilippo and Vesuvius; Hogarth found his in a pot-house at Highgate, where a drunken quarrel and a broken nose first "woke the god within him." Both, however, reached the sublime in their respective vocations,—Hogarth in the grotesque, and Salvator in the majestic.

converted into a panorama, representing the enchanting views it commanded of the bay with its coasts, woods, and mountains.*

"Santo sacramento!" exclaimed Madonna Giulia with upraised hands and eyes, as she entered the loggia to take her "fresca," or evening's draught of fresh air. "Cosa stupenda!" re-echoed the simple *signorine*, his sisters, in stupid wonder at their brother's talent and temerity; and the luckless Salvatoriello, for the studies he pursued and the studies he neglected, was doomed to do penance by attendance on matins, mass, and vespers in the great church of the Certosa, with pious punctuality during the whole of the ensuing Lent.

It happened that he one day brought with him *by mistake* his bundle of burned sticks, instead of his mother's brazen-clasped missal; and in passing along the magnificent cloisters, sacred alike to religion and the arts, he applied them between the interstices of its Doric columns to the only unoccupied space on the pictured walls, which gold and ultramarine had not yet covered over.

What was the subject which occupied on this occasion his rude pencil, history has not detailed, but he was bringing to his work all the ardour which in another age went to his "Saul" or "Democritus," when unfortunately the prior, issuing with his train from the choir, caught the hapless painter in the very act of scrawling on those sacred walls, which it required all the influence of Spagnuololetto to get leave to ornament,—walls, whose very angles Annibal Caracci would have been proud to fill, and for whose decoration the great Lanfranco, and greater Dominichino, were actually contending with deadly rivalry and fatal mutilation.

The sacrilegious temerity of the boy-artist called for instant and exemplary punishment. Unluckily, too, for the little offender, this happened either in Advent or Lent, the season in which the rules of the rigid Chartreux oblige the prior and *procuratore* to flagellate all the frati, or lay

* "All' disegno pero sentiva si tirato per modo che non era muraglia di quella casa, o di altre, ove egli avesse potuto mettere la mano, che con certi *piccoli carboncelli*, non ricopresse, con sue invenzioni di piccole figure e paesetti, condotti pero fino a quel segno, che fare poteasi da esso, senza maestro ed in assai tenera età."—*Baldinucci*.

brothers, of the convent.* They were, therefore, ready armed for their wonted pious discipline when the miserable Salvatoriello fell in their way. Whether he was honoured by the consecrated hand of the prior, or writhed under the scourge of the *procuratore*, does not appear; but that he was chastised with a holy severity, more than proportioned to his crime, is attested by one of the most scrupulous of his biographers, who, though he dwells lightly on the fact, as he does on others of more importance, confesses that from the monk's flagellation, "assai percosse ne riportò," he "suffered severely."†

A punishment so disproportioned, a persecution so intolerable, did their usual work; genius took its decided bent; and the burned sticks of Salvatoriello sketched the future destiny of Salvator Rosa in lines never to be effaced. The complaints forwarded to the Casa Rosa from the Certosa, and the indignant but impotent rage of the impetuous boy, whose temperament was even then, what he himself afterwards so eloquently described it, "all bile, all spirit, all fire,"‡ induced his parents to place him beyond the reach of farther temptation, by obtaining his admission into some of the holy congregations, or monastic seminaries, then abounding in Naples. The whole influence and interest of the Rosa family was put into requisition to effect a consummation so desirable; and the exertions of the parents at last procured for the son the countenance and protection of the reverend fathers of the Collegio della Congregazione Somasca.§

When the boy Rosa was presented to the rector of the college, that reverend personage probably saw something

* Voltaire alludes to this in his admirable poem, "Sur l'Egalité des Conditions.

"D'un vil froc obscurément couvert,
Recevoir à genoux après laude et matine
De son prieur cloîtré vingt coups de discipline."

This flagellation, says the French translation of the rules of the order, "se fait après matines. Les frères de la maison basse sont fouettés par le procureur; ceux de la maison haute par le prieur."

† Baldinucci.

‡ Tutto bile, tutto spirito, tutto fuoco.—*Lettera 2da di S. Rosa al' Sign. Dottore Gioe. Ricciardi.*

§ "Da giovinetto il padre per via di alcuni favori il fece intrare nel collegio della congregazione Somasca," &c.—*Passeri.*

in the brilliant countenance and awakened intelligence of the young candidate that predisposed him in his favour. Such was the stuff that made statesmen of ecclesiastics, and such were the pupils which the Jesuits selected from their classes to raise the influence of their order and extend its powers: and all priests are, in ambition, Jesuits, whatever title they take or sect they profess. The name of Rosa, therefore, was without hesitation entered on the list of youthful aspirants who canvassed the protection of those rich, learned, and rigid disciplinarians, the Padri Somaschi of Naples.*

The first migration from home is the first severe trial of human life. The Italians, who are accused of having few domestic virtues, are full of domestic affections. The home of Salvator was not the most congenial, nor the most comfortable; and the ill humour of parental disappointment tended to increase in the truant youth his wandering propensities: still, however, his feelings were fondly and constantly brought back to the haunts of his infancy, as his frequent returns to Naples in after-life sufficiently prove.

The College of the Congregazione Somasca occupied one of the streets of the old part of Naples. The distance from Renella was short; yet the monastic seclusion to which he was condemned, during the blithest years of his life, rendered his separation from his family an exile. He measured it as young hearts are wont to do, not by space and distance, but by time and privation. The adieus given and received on quitting home were attended by all those expressions of regret which belong to the explosion of Neapolitan feelings; for in Naples none weep silently, and joy and grief are alike vehement and noisy in their exhibition.

In an age and country so marked in all their forms and modes by the picturesque, this departure for the college must have been a scene to paint, rather than to describe. The mind's eye glancing back to its graphic details, beholds the ardent boy with his singular but beautiful countenance, and light and flexile figure (both models in a maturer age), issuing forth from the old portal of the Casaccia to attend his father to Naples. He is habited in the fantastic cos-

* The Padri Somaschi belong to an order which takes its name from a town of the Bergomasco, the seat of their first foundation, by "*Il santo e beato Girolamo Miani.*"

tume of the Neapolitan youth of that day, a doublet and hose, and short mantillo, with a little velvet cap, worn perhaps, even then, with an *air gaillard*, and a due attention to those black tresses so conspicuous in all his numerous portraits for their beauty and luxuriance. Vito Antonio, on the contrary, at once to show his loyalty and decayed gentility, affects the fashion of the reigning court mode. For then, as now, all that looked *Italian* was deemed suspicious; and the old Casaccia di cuajo of Vito, in spite of the rudeness of its material, was doubtless made "Spanish wise" with

"Snip and nip, and cut and slish, and slash!"

The father and son, as they brush through the vine-tendrils that festoon the portico, are followed beyond its sill by Madonna Giulia and the weeping sisters. The *cornicello* is bestowed to avert an evil eye; and then another, and a last *Addio, carino*, is given, and the father and son descend the hill of Renella, towards the Strada Infrascata;—the one, with a bounding step, all emotion;—the other, with a measured pace, all wisdom, pouring on the unattending ear of his pre-occupied companion such "wise saws and modern instances" as might be deemed serviceable to him who for the first time leaves that

"Home, where small experience grows."

In their descent, what a scene developed itself to eyes that saw beauty in nature under all its aspects!

"Hill and dale,
Forest, and field, and flood, temples, and tow'rs,"

too soon to be exchanged for the weary round of cloistered walls! The castellated chimneys of the old Casaccia might still be seen through the dark pines. The figure of Madonna Giulia might still be distinguished by the snow-white head-dress, which, like the bodkins that tressed her daughters' locks, sparkled in the sunshine. As she watches the descent of her son, she offers prayers to the Virgin that he might become, for sanctity and learning, "*Il miracolo del suo secolo*" (the wonder of his age). Another turn, and the scene shifts. The hum of Naples, the most noisy city in Europe, ascends like the murmuring of Vesuvius on the eve of an explosion. To precipitous declivities, covered

with pines and chesnut woods, succeed slopes festooned with trailing vines, throwing their tendrils round every object that could catch or sustain them. Here they obscure, and there they reveal, the deep dark chasm, "shagged with horrid thorn," and riven in the rocky soil by some volcanic convulsion; while fanciful edifices of many terraces, fragments of antique ruins, morsels of friezes and of columns, hillocks of tufo, brown and bare, rise among hanging gardens and groves; and chapels, belfries, shrines, and altars, gleam on every side till the noble Strada Toledo is reached, and its palaces exclude the magic scene, supplanting it by one scarcely less picturesque.

Such was the scenery of the Vomiro in the beginning of the seventeenth century: such it is now. From this magnificent and spacious quarter of the city of Naples, the two Rosas proceeded to the dark and gloomy part of the Città Vecchia. The portals of the Congregazione Somasca were but too soon reached; the bell is rung, and is answered by a lay brother;—a parental benediction is given, as it is received, with tearful eyes, and the gates of the monastic prison are gratingly closed upon one of the freest spirits that ever submitted to the moral degradation and physical restraint inflicted, in all such seminaries, upon youth and nature.

The first step of a young student's probation in Italy was in that age, as in the present, marked by his assumption of the dress of the congregation into which he was received,—the monkish habit, whose lengthy folds indicate the effeminate feebleness and intellectual subjection to which the youthful wearer is predestined. Salvator parted with *his* "customary suit," like the shepherd prince of a fairy tale, but "for the nonce," being resolved to resume it on the expiration of his studies; for, from his earliest youth, his aversion to the ecclesiastical condition was fixed and immoveable, and the schemes of parental ambition were as unavailing as they were irrational and short-sighted.

The great secret of genius is its power of concentration,—its faculty of bringing every energy to bear upon a chosen subject; and the most infallible symptom of mediocrity is its tendency to fritter away resources in a variety of pursuits. The zeal which leads to martyrdom is but a type of that ardour of self-devotion which aspires to pre-eminence; less

than *that* never led to immortality in any line. The courses of the Collegio Somasco, which, under the name of "le lettere humane," are the first in the series of instruction, seem to have occupied the whole force of Salvator's talent and attention; classical literature was in deep coincidence with all the instinctive tastes of his ardent temperament: his diligence was intense, and his progress rapid.*—The scenic nature which had hitherto usurped his undivided homage, was now superseded by that intellectual world which burst upon his developed faculties, creating new associations, and engendering more elevated ideas than his wanderings round Pausilippo and Baiæ had yet awakened.† If, in his monastic durance, he sometimes sighed to visit the haunts of his childhood, it was most probably not without the purpose of beholding them by the light of memory and imagination, as the sites once peopled by all that warms the painter's vision or the poet's dream. Then it was that he knew, in the lakes of his childhood, the Avernus and the Acheron of Homer; and saw, in the stunted underwoods which had sheltered his truant head from parental search, the groves where Virgil sent Æneas to seek his golden branch. The grotto which had many a time screened his fervid brow from the noontide ardour of a Neapolitan sun, he now might desire to behold as the vaults which had once re-echoed to the oracles of the Cumean Sibyl; and the ruins so unconsciously sketched with his burned sticks,

"Le colonne spezzate ed i rotti marmi," (*S. Rosa.*)

might now promise him additional delight, as the remnants of those voluptuous villas where Lucullus held his orgies with Horace, or as the spot where Cicero, amidst Falernian vineyards, composed his academic questions.

It was at this tranquil, studious, and ideal epoch of life,—when the passions are still in abeyance, when fancy, bright and unsullied, throws its brilliant halo on every object, and impressions of human grandeur and human virtue are received with more graciousness than accuracy,—that Sal-

* "Col progresso del tempo trascorse tutto lo studio della grammatica, si avanzò alla rhetorica, e giunse ai principj della logica *ove fermossi.*"—*Salvator Rosa, pittore e poeta.*

† "Studiò da giovinetto l' umanità e la rhetorica nel Collegio Somasco," &c. &c.—*Pascoli, Vita di Salv. Rosa.*

vator Rosa is supposed to have laid in that vast stock of classical erudition, and to have acquired that taste for the works of the ancients, which, at a remoter period, formed the inspiration of his works as poet and as painter. It was then he committed to his capacious memory that vast store of antique lore, which diffused an elegant and classical character over his greater pictures and graver poems, and which so curiously and so strongly contrast these productions with those lighter and more fantastic productions of his pen and his pencil, which now place him at the head of the "Romantic" school of Italy, a worthy associate with Shakspeare and with Byron.*

When, however, he had reached the very *acmé* of his classical enthusiasm, when men and manners, and events and deeds, all belonging to the most stirring times and brilliant eras of society, were occupying his thoughts and giving an heroic elevation to his principles, the moment arrived which was to carry him from studies thus congenial and bewitching. The rigid rules of college formalities cut him short in that golden career, from which "fate and metaphysical aid" were invoked to withdraw him.

He was now obliged to pass, by a violent transition, from the harmonizing humanities, to a barbarous and sophistical philosophy. Quibbles and quiddities replaced the sublimity of Homer and the wit of Horace; Virgil retreated before Johannes Scotus; and Sallust and Cicero, having imprinted the graphic imagery of the "Catiline conspiracy" on a mind destined to reproduce it with new features of terror and danger, were banished to make way for the syllogisms of Chrysostom Javello, and the eternal commentaries of Dominick Soto on the text of the eternal Aristotle. Barbara and Baralippton were now thundered upon ears made up to the melody of Ovid and Sannazzaro; and the ticklish doubts of Averroes were offered to a mind whose own were already of a much more deep and perilous character. The transition from poetry to logic, from all that brightens the imagination to all that could cloud the intellect, was too violent to be effectual. It was throwing a cart-harness on the back of a war-horse while the trumpet sounded a charge. The ardent spirit and strong volition

* The opposite extremes of his versatility will be found in his "Regulus," and his "Banditti," his "Babilonia," and his "Incantation."

of the student resisted the tyranny of this absurd domination over mind and talent. "Giunse ai principj della logica ove fermossi." "Arrived at the first principles of logic, *he stopped short*," says one of his laconic biographers; and it appears that neither punishment nor reward could induce him to encumber his memory with the futilities which then served, with other causes, to retrograde illumination and obstruct the genuine sources of useful knowledge.

A more unlucky moment for an obstinate resistance to this long-venerated and long-established system could scarcely be chosen by the most daring innovator; for it was offered at that precise time when Italy (once the cradle* of philosophy, as of all the sciences and all the arts) was the last asylum of that barbarous dialectic, which upheld and decorated all the theological and (in them included) all the political sophisms which enslaved mankind. The creeds of Aristotle and of St. Athanasius were alike

* To Italy philosophy is indebted for Frà Tommaso of Naples, the Swift of his day (the thirteenth century), a high churchman in religion, but in politics a liberal; whose writings are said to have supplied questions which have filled the pages of divines even of the Reformed Church:—for Pietro Pomponazzo, the Locke of the fourteenth century, whose work on the immortality of the soul drew down upon the book and its author the persecution of the Church:—and for Father Anselmo, a Piedmontese of the same epoch, in whose philosophy may be found the whole system of Kant,¹ that high-priest of metaphysical subtility, whose unintelligible language has betrayed many of his *would-be* disciples, male and female, into an affected imitation, which has covered them with a "*ridicule ineffaçable*."—See *Buhl's Histoire de la Philos. Moderne*.

¹ "*Entendez-vous quelque chose de Kant*," said Napoleon one day to a Genevese metaphysician.—"*Non, Sire*," was the reply.—"*J'en suis enchanté*," returned the Emperor; "*ni moi non plus*." The false refinements of this philosophy could never withstand the precision and clearness of the French language; and it accordingly made no ground in France. The Institute, in speaking of the system of Kant, and of those which have sprung from it among his disciples and successors, observes,—"*Pour nous, nous ne pouvons y voir que le renversement de toutes les méthodes d'une saine philosophie, et la source des plus dangereux écarts. . . . Ils peuvent séduire, dans les universités, quelques têtes ardentes et ambitieuses, entraînées par l'espoir d'obtenir à l'aide d'une espèce de divination les lumières qui ne peuvent être que le fruit de l'étude, ou trop sensibles au frivole orgueil d'engendrer la science avec les seules combinaisons de leur esprit: mais les hommes sages et éclairés de l'Allemagne se sont réunis pour censurer de tels égaremens et en déplorer les abus*."—*Rapport de l'Institut présenté à sa Majesté l'Empereur e Roi*.

in exclusive possession of every orthodox mind, as they had been for many centuries; and Christian monks, and monkish laics reared in their seminaries, were the zealous disciples of the heathen philosopher. However much particular sects might differ upon their knotty futilities, they were all, Scotists and Thomists, in accordance to coerce the human understanding, to blend scholastic metaphysics with church mysteries, and to defend the unintelligible dogmas of the one by the incomprehensible quibbles of the other. It is lamentable to reflect through how many ages this venerated farrago of subtilties occupied all the powers of intellect: but Church and State stood sentinels at the outposts of the system, to guard its sophisms and protect its absurdities: and persecution or death—the dungeon, the galley, or the pile—awaited the daring innovator who doubted a miracle by the Madonna, or denied a proposition of the Stagyrite.

The Reformation, however, aimed a blow at this antiquated tyranny, from which St. Peter and his coadjutor Aristotle never recovered. When such powerful assailants as Erasmus and Melancthon, Luther and Laurentius Valla, took the field, it was time once more to unfurl the threadbare banners of St. Thomas, and to erect the more ancient standard of Bonaventure. In France, in Spain, and the Low Countries, the war of the dialecticians was literally a war of death; and logicians fought with other weapons than syllogisms and hypotheses, until the “holy text of pike and gun” decided controversies which could not be settled by less infallible authority. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the contest was carried on with such ferocity between the old and the new scholastics, that the slightest heresy in philosophy was a penal offence in the colleges of Italy; yet it was at this precise period, that a youth (received, as it appears, upon the charity of the institution) neglected the study or disputed the truth of those doctrines, by which all such institutions were then striving to protract their existence, and preserve their influence.

Under what circumstances Salvator divorced himself from these fatiguing and disgusting studies does not appear. The partiality of his biographers, or their ignorance of this part of his life, passes lightly over the event.

Thus much is evident, that he was sent from the Collegio Somasco before his studies were completed: but, though most probably expelled for dulness or for contumacy, all the chroniclers who have noticed this incident in the life of the painter-poet, ascribe his failure in philosophy, after his brilliant successes in the *Lettere Umane*, to a new and ardent passion for a study of a very different nature; and state that, *instead* of the dialectic exercises, he applied himself to the study of music, and to play upon a variety of instruments.*

The luckless boy, for he was still a boy, issued forth from his (by no means) *alma mater*, with a heart much lighter probably than he entered it; and, in spite of his disgrace, with a mind stored with the treasures of antiquity.† He was returning, indeed, to an indigent home, and to encounter the peevish reproaches of parents whose views he was compelled to thwart, but whose name he was destined to immortalise. He had left, however, philosophy behind him, and had bid "a long and a careless adieu" to syllogisms and their modes. His head was full of the sweet melodies of Leonardo Primavera, and the elegant madrigals of Luzzaschi. His heart was opening to feelings which, while they last, deify their possessor. The "sito incantato" of his native paradise was open once more to his wanderings, under more consecrated impressions than those with which he had hitherto visited them. He had all the temperament and all the precocity of an Italian; and, though but sixteen, the brilliant elements of the poet, painter, and musician were vaguely and deliciously operating within him. Life was a brilliant illusion; and even the positive ills of domestic misery could scarcely dispel the benign dream, or cloud its radiance. With such feelings and in such dispositions, the expelled student of the Padri Somaschi ascended the hill of Renella, and presented himself at the portico of the old

* "Comecche l' esercitazioni diallettiche non punto andavangli a genio, s' attenne in quella vece ad imperare la musica ed il suono c' e varj istromenti." *Vita, &c.*

† Almost at the same time Milton, if not expelled, at least incurred rustication, &c. at Cambridge, for his supposed hostility to reigning dogmas; and his complaints while at the university, that he was weary of enduring "the threats of a rigorous master, and something else which a *temper like his could not undergo*," recall the impetuous character and temperament of Salvatore Rosa.

Casaccia, in all the bloom of adolescence, and probably with all the timidity of one under the ban of parental displeasure—the prodigal son of the *famiglia Rosa*!

CHAPTER III.

MUSIC, the true language of passion, which speaks so powerfully, and yet so mysteriously, to senses organized for its reception, awakening our earliest and perhaps our latest sensations of pleasure,—Music at this period of Salvator's life appears to have engrossed his undivided attention;* and the authorities which he afterwards produced to sanction its pursuit, show with what earnestness, and upon what philosophical principles, he cultivated the science.† In the beginning of the seventeenth century, music in Italy was rapidly succeeding, in the public taste, to painting; and (already taken into the schemes of Italian diplomacy) it was applied to the enervation and debasement of the people. Music could instil no treason, preach no heresy:

* The writer of the article "Rosa" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in alluding to the English public having first become acquainted with Salvator Rosa's musical talents through the researches of the late learned and excellent Dr. Burney, observes, "From the specimens given in the History of Music of his compositions, we have no scruple of declaring that he had a truer genius for this science in point of melody, than any of his predecessors or contemporaries."

† Salvator when he attacks the purposes to which music was put by the Church and by the princes of Italy, introduces authorities for his own devotion to the art in the example of many philosophers and sages:

"Io non biasimo già l' arte del canto,
Ma sì bene i cantori viziosi,
Ch' hanno sporcato all' modestia il manto.
Sì ben, ch' era mestier da virtuosi
La musica una volta; e l' imparavano
Tra gli uomini i più grandi e i più famosi.
So che Davidde e Socrate cantavano
E che l'Arcade, il Greco, e lo Spartano
D' ogni altra scienza al par, la celebravano.
E Temistocle già l' Eroe sovrano
Fu stimato assai men d' Epaminonda,
Per non saper cantar come il Tebano."

Satire,—La Musica.

unlike poetry it could be cultivated without offence to the Inquisition. If the man "who has no music in his soul" be a fit instrument for "plots and stratagems," he whose ear was peculiarly organized for the reception of sweet sounds, and who surrendered himself to a passion rendered popular alike by nature and by vogue, was already more than half-disarmed, as a stern reasoner or an inflexible patriot. It was in Naples that the great school of ancient counterpoint, "the sophistry of canons," had been founded on the revival of the art; but in the sixteenth century the pedantry of crude harmonies, the dry and geometrical modulations which were worked like a problem in the mathematics, and were gracious only to senses callous to the "natural concord of sweet sounds," were gradually yielding to a novel style of composition, expressively called "*La musica parlante*." Those flowing lyric melodies, which, by the name of *cantata*, succeeded to the intricate madrigal, were soon discovered by the sensitive Italians to be

"Il cantar che nel animo si sente."*

The first secular music in parts consisted of harmonies adapted to rustic and street ballads, such as were sung and played in Naples and its adjacent towns and villages; and the "villanelle arie," and "canzonette alla Napolitana" were as popular at the latter end of the sixteenth century throughout the Continent, as the Venetian ballad and Provençal "vaudeville" were towards the end of the seventeenth.

All Naples—where even to this day love and melody make a part of the existence of the people)—all Naples was then resounding to guitars, lutes, and harps, accompanying voices which for ever sang the fashionable *canzoni* of Cambio Donato and of the Prince di Venusa.† Neither German phlegm nor Spanish gloom could subdue spirits so tuned to harmony, nor silence the passionate *serenatas* which floated along the shores, and reverberated among the classic grot-

* That music which is felt in the very soul.

† Evelyn, who visited Naples about this time, observes that "the country-people are so jovial and so addicted to music, that the very husbandmen almost universally play on the guitar, singing and accompanying songs in praise of their sweethearts, and will commonly go to the field with their fiddle. They are merry, witty, and genial, all of which I attribute to their ayre."—*Mem.* Vol. i.

toes of Pausilippo. Vesuvius blazed, St. Elmo thundered from its heights, conspiracy brooded in the caves of Baia, and tyranny tortured its victim in the dungeons of the Castello Nuovo; yet still the ardent Neapolitans, amidst all the horrors of their social and political position, could snatch moments of blessed forgetfulness; and, reckless of their country's woes and their own degradation, could give up hours to love and music, which were already numbered in the death-warrants of their tyrants. It was at this period the policy of the Italian governments to steep the senses of the abused people in the soft oblivion of voluptuous and debasing pleasures; to substitute for liberty and independence, and for all the lofty aspirations of noble spirits, the seduction of sybarite indulgence; and to enchain the energies of the citizen by habits of frivolous amusement and vicious excess. A Spanish viceroy might then in Naples (as a late monarch has elsewhere been wont to do) sign at the same moment an order for an execution and for a court-ball; and, while the patriots of the land he misruled were chained to the galleys, or died the slow death of the *carcere duro*, could lead a procession in honour of the Madonna, or grace a midnight masque* amidst a corrupt and a bigoted court: for the means and resources of despotism, though fearful, are few; and the Bourbons of France, Spain, and Naples in recent times, have only re-acted the parts of their ferocious and superstitious predecessors in ruder and remoter ages.

It was at this moment, when peculiar circumstances were awakening in the region of the syrens "the hidden soul of harmony," when the most beautiful women of the capital and the court gave a public exhibition of their talents and their charms, and glided in their feluccas on the moonlight midnight seas, with harps of gold and hands of snow,† that the contumacious student of the Padri So-

- * "E cresciuti così sono i suoi pregi
Che per le Reggie serpe, e si distende
L' arte de questi Pantomimi egregi.
Alla musica in Corte ognuno attende:
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, canta che sale,
La, sol, fa, mi, re, do, canta che scende."

Satire—*La Musica.*

† "Among the women were the Signorine Leonora and Caterina, who were never heard but with rapture (says Della Valle, a contemporary of

maschi escaped from the restraints of their cloister, and the horrid howl of their *laude spirituali*, to all the intoxication of sound and sight, with every sense in full accordance with the musical passion of the day. It is little wonderful if, at this epoch of his life, Salvator gave himself up unresistingly to the pursuit of a science which he cultivated with ardour, even when time had preached his tumultuous pulse to rest; or if the floating capital of genius, which was as yet unappropriated, was in part applied to that species of composition which in the youth of man, as of nations, precedes deeper and more important studies, and for which, in either, there is but one age. All poetry and passion, his young muse "dallied with the innocence of love," and inspired strains which, though the simple breathings of an ardent temperament, the exuberance of youthful excitement and an overteeming sensibility, were assigning him a place among the first Italian lyrists of his age. Little did he then dream that posterity would apply the rigid rules of criticism to the "idle visions" of his boyish fancy; or that his bars and basses would be conned and analysed by the learned umpires of future ages,—declared, "not only admirable for a *dilettante*," but "in point of melody superior to that of most of the masters of his time."*

His musical productions became so popular that the "spinners and knitters in the sun did use to chaunt them" (an image which every street in Naples during the winter season daily exhibits); and there was in some of

Salvator, in speaking of the female musicians of this time), particularly the elder, who accompanied herself on the arch lute. I remember their mother in her youth, when she sailed in her felucca near the grotto of Pausilippo, with her golden harp in her hand; but in our times these shores were inhabited by syrens, not only beautiful and tuneful, but virtuous and beneficent."

* Burney's History of Music.—Of Salvator's Lyrics, Passeri observes, that he had "lasciato correre in giro, alcuni suoi scherzi per musica, di varie idee, per lo più morale ed alcune tragiche, con un stilo facile, dolce e corrente, adattato alla proprietà del canto."

None of his poetry is dated; but there is internal evidence, in some of the pieces found in his music-book by Dr. Burney, of their being the effusions of a very youthful genius. Such are his Sonnet,

"Star vicino al bel idol mio,"

and

"Più che penso a tuoi," &c.

See Burney's *Hist. of Music*.

these short lyric poems, which he set to music, a softness and delicacy that rendered them even worthy to be sung

“By some fair queen in summer bower
With ravishing divisions of her lute;”*

still, however, they are more curious as compared to that stern strain of sharp invective, which runs through all his maturer compositions, and to that dark, deep, and indignant feeling which pervades all his satires. In mature life he may, and doubtless did, look back with a sort of melancholy envy upon the gracious emotions and brilliant illusions from which such strains arose; and (with that mingled sentiment of regret and contempt, which is assuredly felt by all, who, having written when young, revert in a more advanced age to their early compositions,) he may have given a sad smile to those idle dreams which time had long dissipated;—apostrophising with Petrarch his first and fond effusions, the

“Dolci rime leggiadre
Che nel primiero assalto
D’ amor usai, quand’ io ebbi non altri armi.”

It is pleasant, however, ere time and experience had done their work, and turned the excess of an almost morbid sensibility to a far different account, to pause for a moment, and to contemplate the youth of genius—the most splendid aspect of human life—in the full, but fragile enjoyment of its own brief and illusory existence. The clime, the scene, the population, and reigning manners of Naples, were but too favourable to that intoxicating state of excitement, which in all regions characterises the adolescence of highly organized beings; and but too many mortal Parthenopes *then* recalled the ancient haunts of Circe and the

* The following is a perfect anticipation of Metastasio, and out of the reigning mode of *Concetti* introduced by Marini:—

“Dolce pace del cor mio
Dove sei? che ti rubato?
Dimmi almen qual fato reo
Fuor del seno discaccia?
Quando usciste del mio petto
Ove andaste? Entro qual sen?
Torna a me, che alcun diletto
Senza te goder non so.”

Syrens; explaining, if they did not excuse, those aberrations from the strict rules of prudence, which the enemies of Salvator Rosa have magnified into systematic libertinism.

He who has asserted that "the arts of painting, poetry, and music, are inseparable," because, perhaps, they were all united in his own person, had as yet only applied with diligence to the latter. Having acquired considerable mastery on the lute (for which, like Petrarch, he preserved a passion till the last year of his life), he soon became one of the most brilliant and successful serenaders of Naples. Many of those gay and *gaillard* figures* which in after-life escaped from his graphic pencil and rapid graver, with hair and feather floating in the breeze, are said to have been but copies of himself, as he stood niched under the shadow of a balcony, or reclined on the prow of a felucca, singing to his lute the charms or cruelty of some listening Irene or Clorist† of the moment.

But the talents and graces which abroad may have brought captivity to so many hearts, at home produced nothing but remonstrances and grievous disappointment. To his father and mother it was despair to find all their speculations frustrated, all their anticipations blasted, and to behold those powers, which they had destined to the exclusive service of the Madonna, lavished on the mortal charms of some fair damsel whose

"Dolce sorriso
Soavi parolette accorte"‡

would be the only recompense of talents so profanely misapplied. Not only did they deem the vocation of their son a sort of heresy, but the "cantata di camera," the new secular music of the day, a profane sacrilege. Unaccustomed in their youth to go beyond a *madriale*, or hymn to the "Blessed Mother," the sin of innovation was in their eyes added to that of disobedience. Their parental ambition, however, had not reached "the head and front" of disappointment,—for Il Salvatoriello was not yet a *Painter*!

It happened at this careless, gay, but not idle period of

* His figure (says Passeri) had, in all its movements, "qualche sveltezza e leggiadria,"—something agile and elegant.

† The heroines of his lyrics

‡ Sweet smile and gentle wily words.

Salvator's life, that an event occurred which hurried on his vocation to that art, to which his parents were so determined that he should not addict himself, but to which Nature had so powerfully directed him. His probation of adolescence was passed: his hour was come; and he was about to approach that temple, whose threshold he modestly and poetically declared himself unworthy to pass,—*

“ Del immortalitate al tempio augusto
Dove serba la gloria e i suoi tesori.”

At one of the popular festivities annually celebrated at Naples in honour of the Madonna, the beauty of Rosa's elder sister captivated the attention of a young painter, who, though through life unknown to “fortune,” was not even then “unknown to fame.” The celebrated and unfortunate Francesco Francanzani, the innamorato of La Signorina Rosa, was a distinguished pupil of the Spagnuololetto school, and his picture of San Giuseppe for the Chiesa Pellegrini had already established him as one of the first painters of his day. Francanzani, like most of the young Neapolitan painters of his time, was a turbulent and factious character, vain and self-opinionated; and though there was in his works a certain grandeur of style, with great force and depth of colouring, yet the impatience of his disappointed ambition, and indignation at the neglect of his acknowledged merit, already rendered him reckless of public opinion.

It was the peculiar vanity of the painters of that day to have beautiful wives. Albano had set the example; Dominichino had followed it to his cost; Rubens turned it to the account of his profession; and Francanzani, still poor and struggling, married the portionless daughter of the most indigent artist in Naples, and thought perhaps more of the model than the wife. This union, and, still more, a certain sympathy in talent and character between the brothers-in-law, frequently carried Salvator to the *stanza* or work-room of

* “Io che la soglia non osai passare
Con la penna e el pennello il proprio nome
M'inchinava a segnar sul liminare.”—*L'Invidia*.

The whole of his description of the Temple of Fame, in his “*Invidia*,” is full of poetical beauty; and his description of Night is so graphic, that he possibly painted before he wrote it.

Francesco. Francesco, by some years the elder, was then deep in the faction and intrigues of the Neapolitan school; and was endowed with that bold eloquence which, displayed upon bold occasions, is always so captivating to young auditors. It was at the foot of this kinsman's easel, and listening to details which laid, perhaps, the foundation of that contemptuous opinion he cherished through life for schools, academies, and all incorporated pedantry and pretension, that Salvator occasionally amused himself in copying, on any scrap of board or paper which fell in his way, whatever pleased him in Francesco's pictures. His long-latent genius thus accidentally awakened, resembled the *acqua buja*, whose cold and placid surface kindles like spirits on the contact of a spark. In these first, rude, and hasty sketches, Francanzani, as Passeri informs us, saw "molti segni d' un indole spiritosa," ("great signs of talent and genius"), and he frequently encouraged, and sometimes corrected the copies, which so nearly approached the originals.* But Salvator, who was destined to imitate none, but to be imitated by many, soon grew impatient of repeating another's conceptions, and of following in an art in which he already perhaps felt, with prophetic throes, that he was born to lead. His visits to the workshop of Francanzani grew less frequent; his days were given to the scenes of his infant wanderings; he departed with the dawn, laden with his portfolio filled with primed paper, and a palette covered with oil-colours: and it is said that even then he not only sketched, but coloured from nature (*dal naturale*†). When the pedantry of criticism, at the suggestion of envious rivals, accused him of having acquired, in his colouring, too much of the *impasto* of the Spagnuolo

* Although it is hinted by some of his biographers, that Salvator studied under his maternal uncle, Paolo Grecco, "principiò a farsi istruire con regola da Paolo Grecco suo zio materno" (*Vita de S. Rosa*), yet the tame manner of his relation must rather have disgusted him with the art than encouraged its pursuit: and the more respectable authorities make no mention of this circumstance. On the authority of Pascoli, it appears that he not only studied painting, but that he resumed his literary pursuits under the roof of his brother-in-law; for he observes, in speaking of his devotion to painting and letters, that, at this period, "proseguiva egli con egual attenzione l' uno e l' altro studio." The "idleness" attributed to S. Rosa is among the most obvious calumnies directed by a party-spirit even in the present day against this libelled *liberale* of the seventeenth century.

† Passeri.

school, it was not aware that his faults, like his beauties, were original; and that he sinned against the rules of art only because he adhered too faithfully to nature. Returning from these arduous but not profitless rambles, through wildernesses and along precipices impervious to all, save the enterprise of fearless genius, he sought shelter beneath his sister's roof, where a kinder welcome awaited him than he could find in that home where it had been decreed from his birth that *he should not be a Painter*.

Francauzani was wont, on the arrival of his brother-in-law, to rifle the contents of his portfolio; and he frequently found there compositions hastily thrown together, but selected, drawn, and coloured with a boldness and a breadth which indicated the confidence of a genius sure of itself. The first accents of the "thrilling melody of sweet renown" which ever vibrated to the heart of Salvator, came to his ear on these occasions in the Neapolitan *patois* of his relation, who, in glancing by lamplight over his labours, would pat him smilingly on the head, and exclaim, "Fruscia, fruscia, Salvatoriello—che va buono:"*—simple plaudits! but frequently remembered in after-times, (when the dome of the Pantheon had already rung with the admiration extorted by his Regulus,) as the first which cheered him in his arduous progress.†

Since the great schools of Tuscany, Rome, and Lombardy had been established, or rather, since certain peculiarities in the works of men of supereminent genius had grown into precedents, and supplied examples which pedants took for rules, it had been the fashion for all aspirants in the art to make what *they* called their *giro*; and having run through Italy, and studied or worked in the galleries, churches, or *stanze* of the eminent masters in Rome, Milan, Florence, and Venice, they returned to their place of per-

* "Go on, go on, (or literally, rub on,)—this is good."

† The ambition of Francauzani for his brother-in-law went no farther at this period than to enable the indigent boy to earn wherewith to "feed and clothe himself." "Perche," says Pascoli, "oltre all' essergli maestro, gli era anche cognato, bramava che guadagnasse tanto almen col pennella che gli bastasse per lo vitto e pel vestito."—"For besides that he was his master, he was his brother-in-law, and he was desirous that he (Salvator) should at least earn by his pencil as much as might procure him clothes and sustenance."

manent sojourn, pursuing the line and adopting the "manner" of some admired and chosen chief, whom chance or coincidence of taste had rendered the "god of their idolatry." Originality was rare; it stamped the supremacy of the few, and left the many to earn such inferior honours as might be attained by a happy adoption of the technically styled "*Maniera Raffaelesca, Corregesca, or Tizianesca,*" terms referring to men whose very errors had become precedents, and whose merits had assumed a character of almost divine authority.

To Salvator Rosa, who now adopted painting as a profession, the beaten track lay broadly open; but that there *was* a track, and that a beaten one, was enough to deter him from entering upon it. In his wayward and original mood he left to tamer talent, and more regulated feelings, the hackneyed routine of academies and work-rooms; and striking into a line which no example justified, no precedent recommended, he betook himself to that school where no master lays down the law to aspiring genius, no pupil follows servilely his paralysing dictates;—the school of Nature!

Parental authority now in vain opposed itself to a vocation which made a part of constitutional temperament. Obstacles became stimulants, difficulties served but "to bind up each corporal faculty" to the cherished purpose; and the young enthusiast, no better accommodated than the pious pilgrim whose scrip and staff make up his whole travelling equipage, set forth upon *his giro*, animated by that zeal which leads to the great truths of scenic, as of moral nature, and flushed with that ardour without which there is no genius, no success!

The steps of Salvator were now directed to those wild but splendid regions of his own country, which modern art had not yet violated. Full of difficulty and peril, they might be deemed impervious to mediocrity; but they were alluring to one, who, lonely and proud in spirit, could find in the trackless solitudes of Nature, magnificent and endless combinations of the sublime and the terrific, well suited to satisfy an imagination vehement and pregnant with volition, which could not relish nor endure the insipidities and restraints of conventional forms,—an imagination, which

"man delighted not," and to which the *works* of man afforded not a sufficient excitement.* Salvator Rosa is supposed to have been in his eighteenth year, when, issuing forth with the dawn of a spring morning (an hour and a season finely adapted to his age and enterprise), he began his *giro*, and for the first time bade farewell to his native Naples. In proceeding under the Pizzafalcone to the Porta Capuana, his point of egress from his brother-in-law's residence, he must have passed by the Palazzo Reale, the then newly-erected residence of the Spanish viceroy. There, under golden domes, slumbered at that early hour the puissant and favourite court-painter Spagnuoletto; while his numerous Sequaci, at once servile and factious, filled his anteroom, and waited for the master order that dictated their daily work in the corridors of palaces and the choirs of churches. Salvator *may* too have passed that sumptuous dwelling provided in the Episcopal palace by the *Cavalieri deputati* of the cathedral of Saint Januarius, for the great and persecuted Domenichino, when haply even at that moment the sublimest painter of the age may have dreamt of the dagger of Lanfranco, or the poison cup of Ribera, of which, when awake, he lived in perpetual and nervous apprehension.†

The young artist, in flying from the vices and crimes of the *social order* of *that day*, which under the influence of particular circumstances invaded even the tranquillity of the humanizing arts, may have felt proud and elated in the

* "Salvator Rosa," says Sir J. Reynolds, "saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired of Claude Lorraine's and G. Poussin's long train of imitators."

"Salvator therefore struck into a wild, savage kind of Nature, which was new and striking."

The first of these paragraphs contains a strange anachronism. When Salvator "struck into a new line," Poussin and Claude, who, though his elders, were his contemporaries, had as yet no train of imitators. The one was struggling for a livelihood in France, the other was cooking and grinding colours for his master at Rome. Salvator's early attachment to Nature in her least imitated forms, was not the result of speculation having any reference to the public: it was the operation of original genius, and of those particular tendencies which seemed to be breathed into his soul at the moment it first quickened. From his cradle to his tomb he was the creature of impulse, and the slave of his own vehement volitions.

† Domenichino when at Naples lived in daily dread of assassination by his professional rivals.

consciousness of the career he had struck out for himself, which left him free and unshackled in his high calling, alike remote from the degrading distinctions of patronage and the persecuting malice of envy.

Although nearly all his biographers have alluded to this early and singular *giro*, yet few of its positive details have been preserved. It appears, however, from the *portrait-scenes* preserved in his singular landscapes, of marine views, headlands, castellated rocks, antique ruins, and savage coasts, identified by some particular and authenticated feature, as well as from the physiognomy and costume of his beautiful little groups, known by the name of his "figurine," that he must have traversed and studied much among the wild and sublime scenery of La Basilicata,* La Puglia, and Calabria, the Magna Græcia of the ancients: and it is probable, too, that he was led to this marine circuit (then untouched and unstudied) by those classic associations which distinguish all his compositions, whether of the pencil or the pen. Nearly the whole of the Greek colonies had been confined to these romantic coasts, which still preserve vestiges of the brilliant population that once was spread over them. But if even Cicero in his time could exclaim, "Magna Græcia nunc non est," the desolation which in the days of Salvator brooded over that terrestrial Eden, was of a yet deeper and sadder character. All, however, that these once flourishing regions had lost, (the bustle of their commercial ports, and the splendour of their philosophical schools,) was redeemed in the imagination of the young poet-painter, the boy philosopher, by the magnificent desolation and melancholy grandeur that remained; while to the monuments of empires past away, and the beauties of art, still visible in ruins consecrated by the touch of time and marked by the flight of ages, were contrasted the grotesque and curious groupings of a living age, with all the picturesque forms of existing religious institutions and new political combinations, which, though thinly scattered over a vast and diversified surface, came forth in a vigorous and striking relief.

* Pascoli, who supposes it was by the advice of his brother-in-law that he made this *giro*, observes, "Depingere gli faceva, le vedute più belle di quel bellissimo sito, così s' ando per alcun tempo istruendo e mantenendo," &c.—*Vita di S. Rosa*.

Such was the imagery which, with a force that vibrated to the last hour of life, agitated a mind alive to all that is elevated and sublime, and operated on a fancy eager for the strongest and strangest excitements. Such were the subjects of Salvator's early studies, such the models of untouched sublimity, which enabled him to start forward an original master, at an epoch when every possible mode of originality appeared to have been exhausted. The countless landscapes now so widely scattered throughout the civilized world, and so highly prized in all its countries, are either portraits of scenes sketched at this period, or treasured in a memory singularly tenacious and retentive. Some represent the savage valleys which lie spread at the foot of Monte Sarchio (the first stage of his wanderings), with all their volcanic remains, their surfaces of pumice and tufo, and screen of bleached calcareous hills; others represent fragments of the classic ruins of Beneventum, its noble arch and amphitheatre; others, exhibiting only undulating and sterile mounds and some formless ruins, preserve the characteristic features of the ancient Eclano:* while a dark and desolate plain, dimly lighted by the livid flashes of a turbulent and stormy sky, retraces what was once the site of seductions which Hannibal found more irresistible than the Roman legions. It was at this period that Salvator probably sketched the "prima intenzione" of his great picture of "Democritus," or philosophy smiling amidst death and corruption, at the ambitious projects and final destiny of man. His scene was the site of a once superb and luxurious city; his Democritus was himself: and the moral of his picture, the simple result of his own melancholy reflections, as he leant on the tomb of the freedman of Saturninus, and sketched the ruins of that Cannæ whose splendid palaces and voluptuous population were now only represented by tombs and funeral inscriptions.†

The subjects which presented themselves in the course of his wanderings through La Puglia and along the shores of the Adriatic, and which in detached features so frequently appear in his works, were, the headlands and castellated

* "Il ne reste de cette ancienne ville que quelques débris de murailles, sans forme, et un fragment de quelque edifice auquel on ne sait quel nom donner," &c.—*St. Non.*

† Voyage Pittoresque.—*St. Non.*

rocks of Monte Gargano;* the romantic port of Bari; the sea-lashed cliffs of San Vito, with their fortress-monastery and embattled cloisters, manned by warlike monks, living in constant hostility to the Barbary corsairs; the grottoes of Palignano, looking like the submarine palace of some ocean deity; the Canusium and Brundisium of Horace; and the wizard caverns of Otranto, described by Pliny, and worthy of the incantations of "the Maga" of the Capitol, the first idea of which probably suggested itself to the imagination of the wandering painter amidst scenes admirably consonant to visions so wild. The neighbourhoods of Pæstum and of Salernum are still marked as the frequent and favourite haunts of Salvator; and he is said to have reproduced in numerous *replicas*, the scenery of La Cava,† a site full of savage sublimity and of noble recollections, consecrated alike to religion and to liberty.

It is, however, both biographically and traditionally asserted, that the mountains of the Abruzzi and Calabria, (the most savage and elevated of the Apennines,) commanding on either side views of the Adriatic and Mediterranean, detained for the longest period his pilgrim steps. The curious antique towns, sheltered among their cliffs, sometimes raising their fantastic edifices in the bosom of an extinct volcano, sometimes perched on the almost inaccessible pinnacle of a frightful rock, and inhabited by beings full of the restless energy and uncompromising independence which form the moral attributes of mountainous regions, must have possessed a singular charm to one who presented in his own temperament and character the very abstraction of all such qualities. In these remote and elevated sites, the old spirit of the Greek colonies was far from extinct; and at the period when Salvator visited them, that singular conspiracy was brooding, which was soon afterwards organized, for the purpose of separating Calabria from the Austro-Spanish dominions in Naples, and of founding, or rather restoring, the republic which had flourished under the first Greek colonists.‡ There the young enthusiast

* In La Puglia.

† St. Non, in observing that it was among the solitudes of *La Cava* Salvator Rosa sought for models of "*le genre grand, noble, et sévère*," terms it himself "*ce triste desert*."

‡ The principal conspirators were the celebrated Tomaso Campanella, the author of several philosophical works, and a number of monks under the

may have first been awakened to the causes of his country's degradation, and have become a patriot from reflection, as he was an ardent lover of liberty from instinct.

It appears, however, that he occasionally escaped even from these last boundaries of social aggregation; that he directed his wanderings to the higher chain of the Abruzzi, and that he studied and designed amidst those amphitheatres of rocks, which, clothed with dark pines, and dashed with bursting torrents, were still freshly stamped with the commotions of that Nature, which in such altitudes knows no repose. There, almost within view of the bold and solitary student, hills sunk to valleys, valleys swelled to hills,—rivers shifted their courses, and latent fires broke forth to scathe the vigorous vegetation which their own smothered ardours had produced. There, amidst earthquakes and volcanic flames, in an atmosphere of lightning, and the perpetual crash of falling thunderbolts, may this Dante of painting have first taken in the elements of his famous "PURGATORIO!" for from such phenomena, which in their destructive sweep and mystic reproductions regard not human interests, man first borrowed his faith of fear, his god of wrath! the unremitting torture of ages, and fires of eternal punishment! the purgatory of one church, and the hell of all!

The event which most singularly marked the fearless enterprises of Salvator in the Abruzzi, was his captivity by the banditti, who alone inhabited them, and his temporary (and it is said voluntary) association with those fearful men. That he did for some time live among the picturesque outlaws, whose portraits he has multiplied without end, there is no doubt; and though few of his biographers allude to the event, and those few but vaguely, yet tradition authenticates a fact, to which some of his finest pictures afford a circumstantial evidence. Salvator, who by temperament was an Epicurean, was on system a Stoic; and even many of his profession and country, who might have pardoned his genius and his successes, never forgave him that rigid morality, those severe unbending

protection of some Calabrian bishops. One thousand five hundred banditti were subsidized as allies, and, with three hundred monks, were already under arms, when the conspiracy was detected by the Neapolitan Government, and the chiefs put to death by the most cruel and prolonged tortures.

principles, which in his precepts and his example shamed the vices of his contemporaries, while they secured him the respect of the first and best men of his age. His association, therefore, among the banditti of the Abruzzi, must have been a matter of accident in the first instance, and of necessity in the second; and he seems to have turned the singular event exclusively to the profit of his art; and to have derived no other result from an adventure, which to a being so fanciful and imaginative may not have been wholly destitute of charm, than an accumulation of those images to which his fame stands so largely indebted.*

The social and political position of the Neapolitan banditti in the beginning of the seventeenth century, forms a curious trait in the history of that beautiful and unfortunate country, where despotism and lawlessness even still meet and agree in their extremes, and where the sovereign continues to tolerate an order (if he no longer avails himself of its assistance) which arises out of the misrule of his own government. In the remotest antiquity, the mountains of the Abruzzi were under the special protection of the god of all thieves, Mercury, as they are now in the holy keeping of Saint Gologaro, the Mercury of the Catholic mythology, and the especial patron of Calabria. The genuine banditti, however, of the seventeenth century, were no vulgar cut-throats, who, like the *Maestrillos* and *Fra Diavolos* of modern times, confined their exploits to road robbery and indiscriminate plunder and assassination. They were, in fact, more nearly allied to the brave, bold *Condottieri*, and the black and white bands of *Medici* and of *Suffolk*, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and though, when unhired, they lived at large and wild, with their hands against every man, and every man's hand

* The contemporary biographers of Salvator Rosa have alluded with timidity to this event. Some have passed it over in silence. The spirit of party has availed itself of an adventure so singular, and turned it with great virulence against the victim of its calumnies. A candid English writer observes, "A roving disposition, to which he is said to have given full scope, seems to have added a wildness to all his thoughts. We are told that he spent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti, and that the rocky desolate scenes in which he was accustomed to take refuge, furnished him with those romantic ideas in landscape, of which he is so exceedingly fond, and in the description of which he so greatly excels. His *Robbers*, as his detached figures are commonly called, are supposed also to have been taken from the life."—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. *Rosa*.

against them, yet they occasionally rivalled in dignity and importance the standing armies of existing legitimates, fighting like them for hire in any cause that paid them, and attacking the rights and liberties of all who stood in the way of the ambition, cupidity, or despotism of their employers, with all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of legitimate warfare. Like the marine letter of marque, half pirate, and half national, their troops were regularly enrolled and disciplined; and though their ranks were filled with the wild and the worthless—with men born out of the pale of civilized society, or driven beyond it by their crimes,—yet many among them were of a superior cast: they were outlawed gentlemen of Naples, escaped from the wheel and the scaffold, to which their efforts in the cause of their country had condemned them; who, seeking shelter in the savage wilds of the Abruzzi, became, by their talents and rank, chiefs and leaders of men associated and armed against society under the influence of far different causes. It is an historical fact, that the number, skill, valour, and fidelity of these bands had rendered them, at the period here alluded to, so formidable in the eyes of the Austro-Spanish government, and so respectable in the estimation of the people, that, by a strange inversion of principle, these natural enemies of society frequently became its chosen champions; and even the government, against whom they were so often and so openly at variance, was glad to take them into pay, and employ them in its service. When, however, they were in hostility to the legitimate cause, the same government pursued them with regular troops to the verge of their inaccessible fastnesses; and burnt, tortured, and hanged the same persons as enemies, whom they had previously recompensed and encouraged as allies.*

* “Chaque Viceroi, chaque commandant de place, chaque employé du gouvernement avait des bandits sous sa sauvegarde; auxquels il assurait l'impunité et la récompense des violences et des assassinats qu'il leur faisait commettre pour son compte. Les couvens même avaient leurs assassins; et dans la conspiration du Père Campanella on vit avec étonnement que les moines de la Calabre pouvaient mettre sous les armes plusieurs milliers de bandits. Les brigands campaient presque aux portes des villes, et l'on ne pouvait passer sans escort de Naples à Caserta ou à Averso.”—*Sismondi, Literat. du Midi.*

The stronghold of this singular order had long been in the Abruzzi. There, amidst

“Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens,
And shades of death,”

they held with their families a wild and precarious, but not a joyless existence; while occasionally they were brigaded into separate bands, and distributed, under the protection of the government, among the towns and cities of the kingdom, or garrisoned the domestic fortresses of the factious Neapolitan barons, and others of the same rank, who lived in perpetual hostility with that ruling power, by which they were perpetually distrusted and oppressed. Many of these haughty nobles (themselves flying from the circles of their native metropolis) exercised the old trade of the Italian highwaymen, and reclaimed their ancient rights as feudatory princes over the adjacent country. Upon these occasions they were sometimes joined, and sometimes opposed, by the banditti of the Abruzzi, as the interests or the feelings of these formidable outlaws led them to embrace or to reject their cause.

The conflicts of unregulated interests, and of lawless but powerful volitions,—the stern elevation of character, reckless of all human suffering, beyond all social relations,—the play of strong antipathies, and operation of strong instincts,—the fierce rebuff of passions, wild as the elements among which they were nurtured,—the anatomy of the mixed nature of man, laid bare, and stripped of all disguise, were subjects of ennobling study to one who saw all things as a philosopher and a poet—one who was prone to trace, throughout the endless varieties of external forms, the deep-seated feelings that produced and governed their expression. In the fierce guerilla warfare of the Abruzzi, between the Spanish and German troops and the mountain-bands, may be traced the leading character of that vast and wondrous battle-piece* which is destined to be the study of successive generations of artists; and to the necessities of the outlaw's life we are indebted for many of those singular groupings and views of violence and danger, which

* Now in the Musée at Paris.

form the subjects not only of the pencil, but of the graver, of Salvator Rosa.

There is one engraving which, though evidently done *à colpo di pennello*; seems so plainly to tell the story of the wandering artist's captivity, that it may, as an historic fact, if not as a *chef d'œuvre* of the art, merit a particular description. In the midst of rocky scenery appears a group of banditti, armed at all points, and with all sorts of arms. They are lying, in careless attitudes but with fierce watchfulness, round a youthful prisoner, who forms the foreground figure, and is seated on a rock, with languid limbs hanging over the precipice, which may be supposed to yawn beneath. It is impossible to describe the despair depicted in this figure: it is marked in his position, in the droop of his head, which his nerveless arms seem with difficulty to support, and in the little that may be seen of his face, over which, from his recumbent attitude, his hair falls in luxuriant profusion (and the singular head and tresses of Salvator are never to be mistaken). All is alike destitute of energy and of hope, which the fierce beings grouped around the captive seem, in some sentence recently pronounced, to have banished for ever. Yet one there is who watches over the fate of the young victim: a woman stands immediately behind him. Her hand stretched out, its forefinger resting on his head, marks him the subject of a discourse which she addresses to the listening bandits. Her figure, which is erect, is composed of those bold straight lines, which in art and nature constitute the *grand*. Even the fantastic cap or turban, from which her long dishevelled hair has escaped, has no curve of grace; and her drapery partakes of the same rigid forms. Her countenance is full of stern melancholy—the natural character of one whose feelings and habits are at variance, whose strong passions may have flung her out of the pale of society, but whose feminine sympathies still remain unchanged. She is artfully pleading for the life of the youth, by contemptuously noting his insignificance. But she commands while she soothes. She is evidently the mistress, or the wife of the Chief, in whose absence an act of vulgar violence may be meditated. The youth's life is saved: for that cause rarely fails to which a woman brings the omnipotence of her feelings.

The time spent by Salvator among these outlaws has never been verified; but it is probable, and indeed evident, that he remained sufficiently long to fill both his imagination and his memory with accumulated combinations of the magnificent and the terrible. It is not impossible that the adventurous artist owed the security in which he pursued the interests of his art, in such abodes of violence and danger, to the exertion of talents both musical and poetical, not less calculated to amuse his ferocious hosts by the midnight fires of their earth-embosomed dens, than to captivate the voluptuous auditory of a Neapolitan saloon. One almost sees the melancholy severity of the well-pictured female who saved his life, softening into feminine emotion as she listens to lays composed for the syrens of the Chiaja, which she once may herself have merited and received; while the stern features of her bandit lover now relax into pleased attention at some humorous improvviso which recalls his native Naples, now contract into looks of dark distrust as he watches the mellowed expression of those bright black eyes, whose wildness never before softened to other accents than his own. The mountain auditory of the lyricist of Renella were, indeed, banditti, the outcasts of society; but they were Italians, and original conformation may have triumphed over habits little favourable to the arts, or the tastes they engender.

Under what circumstances Salvator was restored to civilized society, the biographers, who scarcely do more than allude to his capture, have not detailed. Whether he escaped, or was liberated by the caprice or the generosity of the banditti, is unknown; but it is certain, that after having wandered through the most inaccessible regions of the kingdom of Naples, under every hardship incidental to poverty in such perilous and unaccommodated enterprises, he returned to the capital at an epoch marked by the residence of the illustrious Lanfranco in that city, and by the intrigues of the school of Spagnuololetto, which not long after assumed a character of political importance.*

* "Salvator Rosa se mit ensuite sous Ribera, où il profita beaucoup. Il y resta jusqu'à vingt ans, qu'ayant perdu son père, Ribera le mena avec lui à Rome. Pendant quatre années il y fit des études considérables."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres*, p. 351, tom. i. 1745, Paris.

Every word of this is false, and in direct contradiction to all the Italian

Fresh from the stupendous altitudes of the Abruzzi, with all their mightiness impressed upon his mind, the ardent disciple of Nature must have felt the superiority of her great school over all of mere human institution; and he must have been little inclined to enrol himself, even if he had possessed the means, among the followers of the masters who then reigned supreme over the public taste of Naples. The state in which he found his wretched family on his return, plunged him in despondency; and that buoyant spirit which encountered fatigue and danger with such cheerfulness and patience, flagged and drooped under home inflictions, which were all directed at the heart, and which zeal and perseverance could not remove, nor enterprise and ardour hope to overcome.

The first illusions of early youth were fled, and the real and inevitable miseries of life, of which during the rest of his days (even in the bosom of prosperity) he entertained so keen and painful a conviction, came upon his apprehension in truths which sensibility sometimes anticipates, but which philosophy and reflection never fail to substantiate. He perceived that the talent and industry of his father, the piety and virtues of his mother and innocent sisters, the genius and high spirit of his brother-in-law, were alike insufficient to save them from neglect, contempt, and distress; while on every side, crawling mediocrity and unabashed impudence snatched the meed of worth and merit: he saw the moral order of things everywhere deranged; and the laws of justice, he once fancied immutable, everywhere violated.

For the talents of Francesco Francanzani he appears to have entertained the highest respect; yet he found him, in spite of a genius none disputed, declining in his art, for want of that protection which, under despotic governments, holds the place of public suffrage. This young and original painter, reduced to struggle for the daily morsel that scarcely fed his family,* became sullen and soured to fero-

writers on the same subject. Ribera's visit to Rome occurred after he had studied with Caravaggio in 1606, and before Salvator was born.

When Rosa *did* enter the school of Ribera (Spagnuololetto), "*la frequentasse poco tempo*," says Lanzi, whose fidelity may always be depended on.

* "Ne alcun soccorso sperar poteva dal cognato che aveva numerosa famiglia da sostentare."—*Pascoli*.

city; and neglecting all the higher inspirations of his art, he executed only coarse subjects in the coarsest manner, for those homely customers, whose vulgar piety and strong energies found something analogous to their own feelings in the strongly-conceived martyrdoms which his cynical indignation dashed carelessly off for the public market.

These melancholy forecasts were soon converted into more painful realities. A few days after Salvator's return, Vito Antonio Rosa died in the arms of his son, and bequeathed to the maintenance and protection of an unprovided youth of eighteen, an helpless family, deprived, says one of his biographers expressly, "d' ogni umano provvedimento,"* of every human provision.

There is scarcely any position in the series of human ills (a fearful array!) more heart-rending in its contemplation than that of youth blasted in the spring of its brief enjoyment, checked in the first flow of its warm and genial emotions, and repressed in its first ardent aspirations, by some untoward destiny, which anticipates the march of time, and hurries on the inflictions "which flesh is heir to," ere the diminished sensibility of age has prepared the heart for their endurance.

Such was the lot of Salvator Rosa; a man, who from the internal evidence of all he said, wrote, or painted, was evidently endowed with sensibilities approaching to malady, and who, gifted with the true temperament of genius, was framed to receive all impressions in their utmost force and intensity. Alive, as he appears to have been through life, to all the "relations dear and all the charities" of consanguinity, he now stood in the midst of that helpless family, to which he was to be as

"Father, son, and brother,"

with no other means of rescuing them from the famine which already assailed them, than those his pencil could procure. His portfolios teemed with splendid sketches, which, at the distance of a century from his death, would have procured any price, but which *then* would not purchase a morsel

* Pascoli expressively says, that the death of his father left him rather in misery than poverty, "La morte del padre, che lo lascio miserabile più tosto che povero."

of bread. He had resources in his genius and classical education which should have afforded him a liberal existence, and have led at once to fortune and to fame, if merit and success were inevitably cause and effect; but he was oppressed even then with an intuitive conviction that worth and independence are stumbling-blocks, not stepping-stones, in the path of fortune.

The prevailing usage of the Neapolitan School had been to give but a short time to the study of design, and to proceed, almost immediately after the acquirement of its first elements, to that stage of the art, which they called "*à pittorare*," or "washing-in." There was in this hurried mode of proceeding, which Salvator acquired in his brother-in-law's workshop, something analogous to his own bold, prompt, and rapid perceptions; and he had made such progress before his *giro* in Calabria, that he had already executed some landscapes on canvas ("*si fece ardito di por mano alle tele, ed a poco a poco si stese alla misura di quattro palmi*," says Passeri). Such, however, was his poverty at the moment which required all the advantages which the mechanism of the art could lend his genius, that he was unable to purchase the canvas to paint on, and was reduced to the necessity of executing his pictures upon that *primed* paper on which his boyish talents had first displayed themselves. Thus pressed, the young and obscure landscape-painter of Renella had no chance of appearing in the arena where the Spagnuololetto, the Lanfranco, the Domenichino, and their protected pupils, were disputing the prize of pre-eminence. In want and privation, and destitute of that tranquillity of mind so necessary to the concentration of genius on its subject, the only market open to him was the miserable bulk of one of those few *rivenditori* who then, as now, held their stand for second-hand, damaged, and valueless goods in the Strada della Carità. Thither, after having worked in his desolate garret all day, in view of penury and its concomitant discontent, the young artist was wont to repair at night, and timidly hovering near the old *bottega* of his virtuoso Shylock, to seize some propitious moment for entering and drawing from beneath his threadbare cloak one of those exquisite designs which have since contributed to his immortality. It is no stretch of the

imagination to suppose him grouped with his shrewd chapman beneath the flame of a pendent lamp, such as still lights the similar shops of Naples, holding up one of his pictures for the old man's observation; his own fine face, with its "African colouring" and passionate expression of impatient indignation, contrasting with the wizard look which escapes from under the Jew's large flapped, yellow hat, while he affectedly underrates a work of which he well knows all the merit. At last the purchase is made and the miserable pittance is given;—that scantiest price which hardly sufficed to satisfy with a "vile morsel," the famine of those who depended solely on Salvator's exertions, even for this scanty sustenance.

With such means, and for such rewards, Salvator Rosa continued to labour with indefatigable but unrequited industry. All his recreations were laid aside. Pausilippo no longer re-echoed to the sweet tones of his lute. The Cloris and Irenes of his enamoured boyhood lived unsung, at least by *his* melancholy muse. He neither wrote nor read poetry. His studies, all bearing upon his art, were confined to sacred and profane history, the events and characters of which are spread over his smallest and least important landscapes; for even in his delineations of those savage forests, which, like his own Dante, he loved best, man and his great moral agency are constantly to be found. There were (as critics have asserted) among these early productions of his pencil, of which some are still extant, many which were afterwards repeated by himself upon a great scale. The stamp of originality, and the total absence of that mannerism then so prevalent, distinguish these his earliest no less than his later works. In their execution there was a freedom almost miraculous in so young and inexperienced a practitioner; and in the selection and conception of the subjects, there were evidences of the same bold, brilliant, and poetical imagination—the same deep sagacious study of Nature, which characterized the finished works of his mature age. All was vast; all was characterized by strength and magnitude. A rock, a tree, a cloud, exhibited the elevation of his fancy. His most minute figures were marked by an expression which painted a character, while it indicated a form. His "Robber Chief"

was always distinguishable from the ruffians he led,* less by his habits than by those distinctions which high breeding on the human, as on the brute subject, rarely fails to impress. The light leafing of his trees, which seem to vibrate with a motion of the passing air, the breaking up of his grounds, his groups and figures all in movement, exhibit a life and an activity that excited correspondent sympathy in the spectator, and evinced that Nature in his works, as in her own, knew no pause. Yet these early works, containing the *prima intenzione* of many after-productions, which, if better executed, were not more powerfully conceived—these first and beautiful efforts of Salvator's genius sold, says his friend Baldinelli, "at the lowest or vilest prices"—"*ad ogni prezzo più vile.*" It is singular that he, who afterwards stood forth as the only eminently original master which Naples ever produced, should have excited no attention, at the time that the Neapolitan School had attained to an excellence, and enjoyed a reputation, it never before and never after possessed, and when the public taste consequently may be supposed to have reached its maximum. But the state of painting in Naples at that epoch, both as an art and as a profession, throws some light upon a fact, which appears strange at least, if not mysterious.

The Greek origin of Naples suggests the idea of its early excellence in the arts. The fine organization of its fantastic people, to whom the term genius has been applied as generic—the remembrance that a school of design existed in Sicily before one was established at Athens—the fact that the art of painting was never lost there; and that those black-visaged Madonnas which supplied the Church with its first commodities in that line, though called of the Greek School, were executed by Neapolitan masters before the age of Cimabue—all tend to impress the preconception, that the school of Naples should have been pre-eminent, and have given to Italy some of her most original and illustrious masters. The fact, however, is quite otherwise. Naples

* A splendid illustration of this remark lies before the author, as she writes, in an etching of Salvator's. It is a single figure, of a Captain of Banditti. He is alone, near a rock; his hair floating wildly on the wind, his countenance marked by that deep moral melancholy, that pensive and meditative sadness, which the turbulent remorse of vulgar minds never produces.

produced but *one original master*, whose merits she never acknowledged till posterity forced them on her apprehension—and that master was Salvator Rosa. Her school of painting, which alternately took the epithet of Zingarescha, Raffaalesca, and Caravaggesca, till the *manner* of all met and combined in the school of Spagnuololetto (the second epoch of painting in Naples), was ever in the eyes of the great Italian virtuosi a *mere* school of mannerism, “La Scuola dei manieristi.”* The genius of the people was turned to another art, in which they have distanced all other nations; and the establishment of a school of painting in the land of the Syrens was but an effort of fashion, and of the domineering emulation of the age. But what the leaders of the Neapolitan School of Painting wanted in originality they supplied by energy, and by that “certo fuoco animatore,” which seems the birth-right of their volcanic clime. The same fierce passions which armed them against each other in their work-rooms, and united them against all foreign intruders upon their exclusive monopoly of the national suffrage, came out in the details of their pictorial compositions, which rarely reflected other forms and aspects than those presented by the wild, acute-visaged population by which they were surrounded.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, the manner of the Neapolitan school was purely Caravaggesque. Michael Angelo Amoreghi, better known as Il Caravaggio (from the place of his birth in the Milanese, where his father held no higher rank than that of a stonemason), was one of those powerful and extraordinary geniuses, who are destined by their force and originality to influence public taste, and master public opinion, in whatever line they start. The Roman School, to which the almost celestial genius of Raphael had so long been as a tutelar divinity, sinking rapidly into degradation and feebleness, suddenly arose again under the influence of a new chief, whose professional talent and personal character stood opposed in the strong

* From the sixteenth century all the great capitals of Italy began to be distinguished by their Schools, which had each some marked and peculiar characteristic. That of Naples, as Lanzi very justly observes, “non ha avuto forme così originali come altri d’Italia. Ma ha dato luogo ad ogni buona maniera, secondo che i giovani usciti di patria vi han riportato lo stilo di questo o di quel maestro.”

relief of contrast, to that of his elegant and poetical predecessor.

The influence* of this "uomo intrattabile e brutale," this passionate and intractable man, as he is termed by an Italian historian of the arts,† sprang from the depression of the school which preceded him. Nothing less than the impulsion given by the force of contrast, and the shock occasioned by a violent change, could have produced an effect on the sinking art, such as proceeded from the strength and even coarseness of Caravaggio. He brought back Nature triumphant over mannerism—Nature, indeed, in all the exaggeration of strong motive and overbearing volition, but still it *was* Nature; and his bold example dissipated the langour of exhausted imitation, and gave excitement even to the tamest mediocrity and the feeblest conception.‡ The languid public of Rome, startled into emotion by representations so new and so striking, communicated its feeling to all Italy; and the fame and influence of Caravaggio obtained an *éclat* from his "Gipsy Fortune-teller," and his "Gamesters," scarcely less brilliant than that extorted by the divine Madonnas of Raphael, and the laughing cherubs of Coreggio.

The temperament which produced this peculiar genius was necessarily violent and gloomy. Caravaggio tyrannized over his school, and attacked his rivals with other arms than those of his art. He was a professed duellist; and having killed one of his antagonists in a *rencontre*, he fled to Naples,

* Passeri observes of the change wrought by Caravaggio, "fece prender fiato al gusto buono ed al naturale, il quale allora era sbandito dal mondo, che solo andava perduto dietro a un depingere ideale e fantastico, ma lontano dalla natura e dal vero."—*Vita di Guido Reni*.

† "Si propose la sola Natura per oggetto del suo pennello," says Bellori, in his *Life of Caravaggio*; and when, on his first arrival in Rome, the *cognoscenti* advised him to study from the antiques, and to take Raphael as his model, he used to point to the promiscuous groups of men and women passing before him, and say "those were the models and the masters provided him by Nature." Teased one day by a pedant on the subject, he stopped a gipsy-girl who was passing by his window, called her in, placed her near his easel, and produced his splendid "Zingana in atto di predire l'avventure," his well-known and exquisite Egyptian Fortune-teller. His "Gamblers" was done in the same manner.—See Bellori, *Vita di Michel Angelo da Caravaggio*.

‡ Of the awe which he inspired, Passeri has given a very characteristic anecdote in his *Life of Guercino*, p. 374.

where an asylum was readily granted him.* His manner as a painter, his character as a man, were both calculated to succeed with the Neapolitan School;† and the “*maniera Caravaggesca*” thenceforward continued to distinguish its productions, till the art, there as throughout all Europe, fell into utter degradation, and became lost, almost as completely as it had been under the Lower Empire.

Resembling their master in character, in principles, and in genius, the pupils of Caravaggio, while they ambitiously governed public taste, as carefully excluded all who were not educated in the master-faction; and they pursued with deadly persecution all foreign masters, whose celebrity obtained for them any of the great public works, commanded by particular congregations or corporate bodies of Naples. These bandits of the arts were Bellisario Corenzio, Giambattista Caracciolo, and Giuseppe Ribera, called *Lo Spagnuolo*. The first a Greek, and originally a pupil of Arpino; the second a Neapolitan, and wholly and devotedly of the school of Caravaggio; and the last a Spaniard, who imbibed his first inspiration at the easel of the armed assassin,

* In a warm dispute with one of his own young friends in a tennis-court, he struck him dead with a racket, having been himself severely wounded. Notwithstanding the triumphs with which he was loaded in Naples, where he executed some of his finest pictures, he soon got weary of his residence there, and went to Malta. His superb picture of the Grand Master obtained for him the cross of Malta, a superb golden chain, placed on his neck by the Grand Master's own hands, and two slaves to attend him. All these honours did not prevent the new knight from falling back into old habits. “*Il suo torbido ingegno*,” says Bellori, plunged him into new difficulties: he fought and wounded a noble cavalier, was thrown into prison by the Grand Master, escaped most miraculously, fled to Syracuse, and obtained the suffrages of the Syracusans by painting his splendid picture of the *Santa Morte* for the church of Santa Lucia. In apprehension of being taken by the Maltese knights, he fled to Messina, from thence to Palermo, and returned to Naples, where hopes were given him of the Pope's pardon. Here, picking a quarrel with some military men at an inn-door, he was wounded, took refuge on board a felucca, and set sail for Rome. Arrested by a Spanish guard at a little port (where the felucca cast anchor) by mistake for another person, when released he found the felucca gone, and in it all his property. Traversing the burning shore under a vertical sun, he was seized with a brain fever, and continued to wander through the deserts of the Pontine Marshes, till he arrived at Porto Ercoli, when he expired, in his fortieth year.

† “*Con quelle sue ombre terribili, con quel fracasso di scuri e di lumi, con quei grand tratti a meccia, che non lasciano distinguere i contorni, con quelle sue ignobili minacciose figure, sorprese il pubblico.*”

whose genius he nearly equalled, and whose atrocity he far surpassed.

Giuseppe Ribera had been brought in his infancy from his native country by his father, a follower of the Spanish interests; and he was placed in his childhood in the school of Caravaggio (1606). It was in vain that in aftertimes he was sent on his *giro*, and that in the course of his itinerant studies he adopted for a time something of the ennobling and the beautiful, from the Roman, Tuscan, and Bolognese masters: Nature and Caravaggio still held the ascendant; and he returned to preside over a school which was equally celebrated for its genius and its ruffianism;—for producing the boldest bravoos and the best painters that Naples ever boasted.*

The national partiality of the Viceroy soon distinguished Lo Spagnuololetto from among his condisciples. Loaded with honours, created painter to the court, and assuming over his friends and coadjutors Corenzio and Caracciolo, which his genius and particular position gave him, he yet admitted them to his confidence, and formed by their aid those “Fazioni de’ Pittori,” those conspiracies of the painters, which in the course of time produced a very different effect from that intended by the court-painter of the Spanish Viceroy. His object was to exclude from Naples all talent, except that which emanated from his own school; and, backed by the influence of the Government, and the ferocious courage of his two bravoos and their followers, he gave full play to those dark passions, which, while they pointed his poniard, directed his pencil to the representation of human suffering, the deformities of Nature, torture methodized into system, and agonies detailed with frightful fidelity. While the writhings of Saint Bartholomew, the spasms of Ixion, and the colourless muscles of the attenuated Saint Jerome employed his genius, he was armed, with his two associates, against the fame and the lives of the most eminent men of his day. The execution of the public works, altar-pieces, and the decoration of the several chapels of the magnificent

* “Cos il tempo che corse da Bellisario al Giordano è la più lieta epocha di questa istoria; avendo riguardo al numero de’ bravi artefici e alle opere di gusto. E’pero la più tetra non pur della scuola Napolitana, ma della pittura; ove si abbia riguardo alle cattive arti, e a’ misfatti che vî occorsero.”—*Lanzi*.

cathedrals of Italy, had always been the objects of ambition to the most eminent of the Italian painters. In the best ages of the art, merit and reputation always decided the choice; but in its decline, intrigue and the interference of Government uniformly influenced the decision. At the period in question several great works were designed, whose execution was to be committed to masters, at the will of the particular convents to which the churches to be decorated belonged. The choir of the Certosa, the great churches of the "Spirito Santo" and "Gesù Nuovo," were to be enriched by the arts: but the work most coveted by the great foreign masters, and still withheld from the Neapolitan cabal, was the royal chapel of the Duomo of St. Januarius, the temple of the people and the object of national veneration. A committee, with the title of "Cavalieri deputati," had been appointed to superintend the works of the Duomo; and they had obeyed the people in successively calling upon the illustrious Annibal Caracci, and his immortal pupils Guido and Domenichino, to undertake the work: but the intrigues, the persecutions, and the violence of the court-painter were found more influential than the wishes of the whole nation; and these great men successively paid the forfeit of their peace or of their lives, for having accepted the invitation and intruded upon the gloomy and desperate conspirators. The injustice and indignity with which Annibal Caracci had been treated by the chiefs of the Neapolitan School,* combining with his deep sense of the ill-treatment of his patron Cardinal Farnese, sent him back to Rome, to die of a broken heart; and his pupil Guido, who had succeeded him, and the venerable Arpino, both saved their lives by flight. The narrow escape of Guido and his distinguished pupil Gessi, and the fate of the two ingenious artists they had left behind them,† had reduced the committee to despair of ever seeing the pictures in their great national churches completed by the most illustrious masters of their age; and at last, yielding to intrigues

* He arrived in Naples, 1609, and began his work in the Gesù Nuovo; but, persecuted and calumniated by the faction, "quel divino artifice," says Lanzi, "returned to Rome, where he shortly after died."

† Gio. Battista Ruggieri and Lorenzo Menini were seduced on board a galley in the Bay of Naples, and disappeared. A mystery long hung over their fate.

secretly favoured by the Viceregal Court, they divided the works among the formidable triumviri. Corenzio and Caracciolo had the frescoes for their portion; and the great altar-pieces were reserved for their chief, Spagnuoletto; but the Cavalieri deputati, struck with repentance for their transient weakness, suddenly recalled their orders, commanded the paltry labours of the two enraged Frescanti to be effaced, and declared that Domenichino, the greatest historical painter that Italy ever produced, was alone worthy to execute works which were to do honour to the piety of a devout people, and to the munificence and judgment of a wealthy order.

Domenichino reluctantly accepted the invitation (1629); and he arrived in Naples with the zeal of a martyr devoted to a great cause, but with a melancholy foreboding, which harassed his noble spirit, and but ill-prepared him for the persecution he was to encounter. Lodged under the special protection of the Deputati in the Palazzo dell' Arcivescovato, adjoining the church, on going forth from his sumptuous dwelling the day after his arrival, he found a paper, addressed to him, sticking in the keyhole of his anteroom. It informed him, that if he did not instantly return to Rome, he should never return there with life. Domenichino immediately presented himself to the Spanish Viceroy, the Conte Montereï, and claimed protection for a life then employed in the service of the Church. The piety of the Count, in spite of his partiality to the faction, induced him to pledge the word of a grandee of Spain, that Domenichino should *not* be molested; and from that moment a life, no longer openly assailed, was embittered by all that the littleness of malignant envy could invent to undermine its enjoyments and blast its hopes. Calumnies against his character, criticisms on his paintings, ashes mixed with his colours, and anonymous letters, were the miserable means to which his rivals resorted; and, to complete their work of malignity, they induced the Viceroy to order pictures from him for the Court of Madrid; and when these were little more than laid in in dead colours, they were carried to the Viceregal palace, and placed in the hands of Spagnuoletto to retouch and alter at pleasure. In this disfigured and mutilated condition they were dispatched to the gallery of the King of Spain. Thus drawn from his great works by despotic

authority, for the purpose of effecting his ruin, enduring the complaints of the Deputati, who saw their commission neglected, and suffering from perpetual calumnies and persecutions, Domenichino left the superb picture of the Martyrdom of San Gennaro, which is now receiving the homage of posterity, and fled to Rome; taking shelter in the solemn shades of Frascati, where he resided some time under the protection of Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini.* Obligated, however, at length to return to Naples to fulfil his fatal engagements, overwhelmed both in mind and body by the persecutions of his *soi-disant* patrons and his open enemies, he died in 1641, says Passeri, "fra mille crepacuori," amidst a thousand heart-breakings," with some suspicion of having been poisoned.

Meanwhile Lanfranco, the quondam condisciple of Domenichino in the school of the Caracci, his powerful rival and deadly foe, received an invitation from the Jesuits of Naples to execute the principal pictures of their new

* It was at this period that Domenichino was visited by his biographer Passeri, then an obscure youth engaged to assist in the repairs of the pictures in the Cardinal's chapel. "When we arrived at Frascati," says Passeri in his simple style, "Domenichino received me with much courtesy; and hearing that I took a singular delight in the belles lettres, it increased his kindness to me. I remember me, that I gazed on this man as though he were an angel. I remained till the end of September occupied in restoring the chapel of Saint Sebastian, which had been ruined by the damp. Sometimes Domenichino would join us, singing delightfully to recreate himself as well as he could. When night set in, we returned to our apartment; while he most frequently remained in his own, occupied in drawing, and permitting none to see him. Sometimes, however, to pass the time, he drew caricatures of us all, and of the inhabitants of the villa; and when he succeeded to his perfect satisfaction, he was wont to indulge in immoderate fits of laughter; and we, who were in the adjoining room, would run in to know his reason, and then he shewed us his spirited sketches, ('spiritose galanterie.') He drew a caricature of me with a guitar, one of Cannini (the painter), and one of the Guarda Roba, who was lame with the gout; and of the Sub-guarda Roba, a most ridiculous figure. To prevent our being offended, he caricatured himself. These portraits are now preserved by Signor Giovanni Pietro Bellori in his study."¹—*Vita di Domenichino*.

¹ P. Bellori (who wrote the Lives of the Painters and of the famous traveller Pietro della Valle) was nephew to Francesco Angeloni, who was, at the moment here alluded to by Passeri, secretary to the Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini, and a resident at Frascati; by which means he probably became possessed of the designs and caricatures which passed into the hands of his nephew Bellori.

and magnificent church, Il Gesù, (1631.) Lanfranco, the popular Parmegiano of the seventeenth century, who, if he could not surpass, frequently approached the excellence of Domenichino, and alone disputed with him the palm of glory—Lanfranco had long enjoyed the most brilliant existence and dazzling reputation of any painter of the age. Reared in the anterooms of feudal nobility, the favourite of the great and the revered of the vulgar, a knight of the Roman empire, an intimate of cardinals and the protégé of popes, he yet was by temperament independent; and conscious alike of his genius and his influence, he epitomized in his person all that has been written of the pride, pomposity, and love of display, which at that particular period distinguished Rubens and others of the most eminent artists.* Endowed with a rapid and indefatigable power of application, so falsely supposed incompatible with genius, his works were more numerous and more generally successful than those of any painter of the age. His prices were enormous, his receipts immense; but his prodigality superior to both. Splendid, luxurious, and ostentatious, his villa of La Vigna, near the Porta San Pancrazio, was the resort of the festive, the elegant, and the dissipated of Rome; and his beautiful wife, Cassandra Barli, (a true Roman lady of the Claudian day,) haughty and “di spirito molto risoluto,” encouraged and participated in the expensive habits of her husband.

The secret disorder which such extravagance had introduced into the affairs of Lanfranco, induced him to accept the offers of the Padri Gesuiti, whose liberality, as boundless as their wealth, gave him his own prices. Accompanied by his superb wife, his three beautiful and accomplished daughters, his Seguaci, or school, and a retinue of servants and equipages, he arrived in Naples with all the éclat of a travelling prince. His showy reputation and bustling character were well adapted to the Neapolitan manners,

* When John Duke of Braganza, afterwards King of Portugal, invited Rubens to Villa Viciosa, that artist set out with such a train of followers, that the Duke, apprehending the expense of entertaining so pompous a visitor, wrote to stop his journey, accompanying his excuse with a present of a hundred pistoles. The sumptuous painter refused this gift; and replied, that he had not proposed to paint, but to recreate for a time at Villa Viciosa, and for that purpose had brought a thousand pistoles to spend there.

and strikingly contrasted with the modesty and retirement of the sublime but melancholy and ruined Domenichino. That he was the rival, and had been the personal enemy of the eminent painter, who had been preferred by the Neapolitan dilettanti to their native artists, rendered his reception, even by the formidable "faction," gracious and flattering.* He was immediately presented to the reigning Viceroy, the Duke di Medina, and earnestly prayed by the Vice-queen, a Spanish lady of great beauty, to paint her picture. All the Neapolitan artists now hurried to Il Gesù, and crowded beneath the cupola, where, mounted on a lofty platform, Lanfranco was already creating that beatific vision of Paradise, which was to surpass the "glory" of his cupola of St. Andrea at Rome. All were anxious to attract the attention of this celebrated artist, either by their personal merit, or by decrying the talents of his immortal rival;† and the highest as well as the lowest among the Neapolitan painters (all alike vain and self-opinionated) sought his suffrage for their works, or endeavoured to get his testimony in favour of their peculiar *maniera*.

One there was whom poverty or pride held aloof from the circle which crowded round the platform of Lanfranco: too obscure to attract his notice, too unbending to seek it; and though not wholly unknown as the author of those bold sketches which sold "ad ogni prezzo più vile," still known only by the familiar and insignificant appellation of Il Salvatoriello. It happened that as the Cavaliere Lanfranco was returning one day in his splendid equipage

* The following original letter of Lanfranco to his friend at Rome, Signor Ferrante Carlo, paints the flattering reception he received at Naples, and forms a strong contrast to the epistles of his great rival.

"Sign. Ferrante, mio Signor,

"La do nuovo che sono arrivato con sanità a Napoli per grazia di nostro Signore, con quella parte di famiglia che V. S. sa: dove sono molto ben visto e accarezzato; talche il contento saria perfetto, se non fosse la rimembranza non diro della patria e di Roma, ma degli amici e padroni che sono in essa. Dei padri Gesuiti ho ricevuto, e ricevo giornalmente gran favori, come fa Cassandra da molte gentili donne di questa paese."

† The rivalry of Domenichino and Lanfranco began in their boyhood, when they were both pupils of the Caracci. Passeri, however, observes, "Col tempo cessarono tutte le ostilità e le perfidie:" and if Domenichino really died of poison, and not (as is much more likely) of a broken heart, Lanfranco by this attestation stands clear of a crime not very consonant with his frank, loyal, and amiable character.

from La Chiesa del Gesù to his lodgings by La Strada della Carità, he was struck by a picture in oil which hung outside the shop-door of a *rivenditore*, with other odds and ends of second-hand wares. Lanfranco stopped his carriage, and ordered Antonio Richieri, his favourite pupil, to alight, and bring him the painting which had attracted his attention. The *rivenditore* was struck by an honour so little to be expected. The carriage of the great Signor Cavaliere Lanfranco stopping before his miserable bulk, was a distinction to excite the envy of all his compeers in the Strada della Carità; and he came forward with many gesticulations of respect, wiping the dust from a painting on canvas, four palms in length, which had lain for weeks unnoticed at his shop-door; while "hells" and "purgatories," saints and martyrs, had *gone off* with successful rapidity.

Lanfranco took the picture into his carriage; and a nearer inspection convinced him of the accuracy of his first rapid decision. It was labelled "*Istoria di Agar e del suo figlio languenti per la seta.*" The affecting story of Hagar had already been treated by Guercino; and the virtuosi of other and distant countries made pilgrimages to Bologna,* to view that master-piece of art which now attracts the eyes even of the unlearned, amidst all the splendid works which surround it in the gallery of the Brera at Milan.

Guercino had taken that moment in the story of Hagar, when, having been brought back to the arms of Abraham by "the angel of the Lord," she is again driven forth through the jealousy of Sarah. She is still in all the force of health and pride of beauty; and she pauses at the threshold of the timid Abraham's dwelling to expostulate and to reproach. The scene is suited to the action; and the commodious pastoral dwelling, from which she is sent an outcast, exhibits all the rural wealth of that Patriarch who is described as being very "rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." But another epoch and another view of the story of Hagar had been taken in the picture which now fixed the attention of the chief of the Roman school. The scene was the wilderness of Beersheba; but so boldly

* This picture originally hung in the Sampieri gallery at Bologna.

conceived, so desolate, and so dreary, that Nature could alone furnish its details in those vast regions where few then had ventured to study. The incident was that, so terrible and affecting in the life of the young outcast mother, when, having long wandered through pathless deserts and under burning skies, she beholds her last hope extinguished; "for the water was spent in the bottle" which Abraham had put on her shoulder, and the bread had long been devoured which stood between her child and death. She was no more the same blooming and indignant Hagar as at the moment of departure; but that Hagar who had, indeed, been "hardly dealt with." She appeared to have just "cast her child under one of the shrubs," and had "sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said, Let me not see the death of the child; and she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice and wept."

There was in the conception of this picture a tone of deep and powerful feeling, a gloomy and melancholy originality, which probably struck on the imagination of Lanfranco even more than its execution. He sought for the name of the painter, who was evidently of no school, who copied no master, and whose manner was all his own; and in a corner he perceived a superscription unknown to fame, and by its diminutive termination almost consigned to ridicule. It was "Salvatoriello." The *rivenditore* either could not, or would not, give any intelligence concerning the painter; and Lanfranco, paying without hesitation the price demanded, carried home the picture in his carriage, and gave general orders to his pupils to purchase all they saw bearing the signature of Salvatoriello, without reservation. When he departed for Rome, Hagar was the companion of his voyage, and became the chief ornament of his picture-gallery at La Vigna,* where he shewed it himself to Passeri.

* All that has been said in the modern biographical sketches of Salvator Rosa, particularly by Fuseli and Pilkington, of the patronage afforded him by Lanfranco, amounts to the solitary fact alluded to by his own contemporaries, that Lanfranco bought some beautiful but low-priced pictures of Salvatoriello, when at Naples, for La Vigna. Neither Bellori, nor any of the Italian biographers of Lanfranco, make the slightest allusion to his ever having spoken to or seen Salvator. In the life, however, prefixed to Salvator's satires, it is said, that Lanfranco "assisted him with money and

This incident of the purchase of Hagar, and the sweeping order that followed it, caused considerable sensation in the school of Spagnuololetto, and among the dilettanti of Naples; which the *rivenditore* who had sold the picture, and others of his brethren who were in possession of works by the same hand, made use of to raise the humble price hitherto demanded for the *quadretti* of the young and neglected artist. They now began to place some value on pictures, which they had hitherto considered it a risk to purchase, even at prices which scarcely repaid the expense for canvas and colours.

But if the public and the profession took some interest in an incident so trifling, it operated like a spell on the indigent and depressed Salvatoriello.

There is a proud consciousness accompanying the highest order of genius, which no neglect can stifle, no failure extinguish. It is a part of that genius itself, springing out of its discrimination, and belonging to its instincts. It may be wounded, blighted, disappointed, but it can never be deceived. It *will* appreciate the superiority out of which it arises, in spite of the dictum of passing opinion and the temporary decrees of a misjudging generation. Equally remote from the petulant arrogance of pretending mediocrity, as from the canting submission of that seeming virtue Humility, it judges, boldly but calmly, of the merit it accompanies, by a standard which contemporary opinion cannot influence. This cheering confidence was not wanting amidst the efforts of the miserable Salvatoriello, through all the neglect and obscurity of his young and struggling

instructions," "con consiglio e col denaro lo incoraggi a proseguire i suoi studj." Neither Baldinucci nor Passeri (the chief authorities for all that has been written of Salvator Rosa in modern times) says anything on the subject. The account given by Passeri is as follows; "Quando ritornò il Lanfranco a Roma da Napoli l'ultima volta, che vi morì, condusse seco quel quadro di Agar, e me lo fece vedere, e per verità era tocco con gran gusto pittoresco. Quei bottegari che si avvidero, che un Lanfranco, pittore di quella stima, comprava i Quadri di Salvatoriello, da loro così chiamato, fecero argomento che fossero di valore, e cominciarono a fare istanza di volerne; ed egli a cui non mancò mai l'accortezza, fattosi destro, si pose in maggior altezza di prezzo." P. 418.

Pascoli, who wrote later, however, observes that Lanfranco having purchased his picture, sought his acquaintance, encouraged him to study, and employed him in painting others. The perpetuated poverty of Salvator during his youth, is the best comment on this variable text.

days; and it broke forth frankly, though perhaps indiscreetly, in the hour of his more prosperous fortunes. He knew his own merit from the first; and a feeling conviction of the contempt and indifference with which he was treated in his native country was, perhaps, the suffering he was the least able to support.

The discrimination of one of the first masters of the age (a foreigner to whom he was unknown even by name) had found him out, and this decision in his favour gave him a confidence that raised those drooping and susceptible spirits, which were but too prone to sink into the deep gloom of cheerless despondency. It had also the dangerous effect of awakening a scarcely concealed emotion of triumph over those, who, by all the arts of intrigue and servility, had failed to obtain the suffrages of the great umpire, who had lavished them on the only *one* who had neither sought his notice, nor availed himself of his favour. Greedy of honour and of fame, as Baldinucci describes the young painter to have been, (“*avido di onore e di stima*,”) and reckless then, as through life, of all sordid views, he yet immediately raised his prices; and though frequently refused his demand, (for there came no more Lanfrancos to the shop of the *rivenditori*,) he persisted in the courageous resolution of not underselling himself, even when famine stared him in the face, and when the exigencies of his family urged him to the sacrifice of that self-respect, which his haughty spirit never after forfeited.

The judgment passed by Lanfranco on his works, by making him known to fame, exposed him to the envy and hatred of the less distinguished candidates for that illustrious painter's notice; and the indiscretion which naturally belonged to his youth, his ready wit and petulant spirit, the brilliant repartees and bitter sarcasms with which he replied to their taunts and calumnies, raised against him that species of enmity, the most deadly, because it is founded on wounded vanity, which never forgives. The painters of Naples, many of them ingenious, but all uneducated, attacked him on the score of his presumption, and on the miserable necessities which obliged him to work for the *rivenditori*; a circumstance then considered as positive degradation. These vulgar sarcasms he retorted by epigrams, distinguished no less by their classic elegance than

their causticity. He sung the satires he wrote; and while he drew the laughter on his side, he armed the dull (always the most numerically powerful) against him. Those versatile talents, however, which raised him an host of enemies, procured him *one* friend, who was well calculated, by his genius and the peculiar cast of his position, to appreciate all that was singular and admirable in the young painter's character. This friend was Ancillo Falcone, the first and best of the pupils of Spagnuololetto, whom for a time he rivalled, and in a peculiar style finally surpassed. Falcone was sixteen years older than Salvator, and was now himself the chief of a school, which, partaking of his own manner, still perpetuated the style of the school of his gloomy master. His great talent was displayed in the representation of battles, in which he was long inimitable, and in which he was never surpassed but by his friend and disciple, Salvator Rosa. Falcone was, indeed, the Xenophon of his art, and, as it afterwards appeared, was well calculated to fight the battles he painted. The energy of his character and the elevation of his mind were exhibited in all he executed. He drew up his forces on canvas with a skill that shewed him no less an able tactician, than an exquisite artist. His subjects were all chosen from history; and his belligerent groups, of all nations and eras, various in their costume and physiognomy as in their arms and evolutions, were all vital in their expression. The motions and attitudes of his figures, and even of his horses, were full of nature and propriety; and it was difficult to believe that this warrior-painter had never seen a battle fought until long after his fame as a painter of battles was established. But it was easy to discern through his earliest productions, the vocation of the future Captain of the *Compagnia della Morte*.

The merits of the obscure Salvatoriello were, probably, made known to Falcone through the incident of Lanfranco's distinction; Falcone, by generously opening to him his own school, and presenting him to Spagnuololetto, acquired for himself and his chief the glory of having counted among their disciples one who was destined to surpass them both. But though a friendship thus begun terminated only with the lives of Falcone and Rosa, the benefit derived by the latter, in a professional point of view, was not consider-

able.* He rather passed through the schools of Spagnuolo and Falcone, than studied in them; and, as Vasari says of Coreggio, was still a painter "made by Nature, rather than by any particular master." Falcone was, indeed, willing to give his young disciple the advantages which rules and the mechanical instruction of the art could afford; but he could do no more—he could not procure him employment; and the unfortunate youth continued, as before, to labour for the *rivenditori*; but, from the increase of his prices, with infinitely less success. His pictures, as they were chiefly landscapes, enriched with groups and incidents taken from profane history, and from the more brilliant adventures of heroic poetry, were not adapted to the Neapolitan market, and in the self-will of honest uncompromising genius he refused to prostitute† his talents to the bad passions and peculiar prejudices of his times and country. He adhered pertinaciously to the delineation of the scenery of Nature, and of human incidents; and when called on by his employers for a subject of terror and suffering, he chose to exhibit the punishment inflicted on a tyrant, rather than the agonies of a divine and innocent being.

The neglect he endured in his native country, whose suffrage he (like all patriots) would have preferred to every other, preyed upon his spirits, and added to his embarrassments: while the consciousness of his superior merits, which he carried to excess, and an ambition which never slumbered, alone supported him through this period of obloquy and distress.

* It is singular that Passeri, who lived in habits of intimacy with Rosa, and must have taken many of his details from Rosa's own mouth, never mentions his having studied either with Spagnuolo or with Falcone. Pascoli, however, observes, that "he was esteemed and beloved by Ribera," and that while he frequented his school he greatly improved himself in design and colouring.

† "E molto fu egli fiero di se medesimo, che se conosceva, e tenevasi in pregio."—*Pascoli*.

CHAPTER IV.

1634-5.

It is one of the peculiar attributes of genius, or of the temperament which produces genius, that its energies increase in proportion to the pressure of those adverse circumstances which require its exertion. The dark moment of Salvator's life, when famine had already begun its ravages in the miserable family* for whose support he still toiled in vain, was the instant which gave birth to his resolution of leaving Naples,† and of seeking the way to fortune by a broader path than that which was open to him in the land of his birth—a land wholly unworthy of the genius it wanted knowledge to appreciate, or patriotism to recompense. With all that promptitude of will, which through life left him no languid pause for timid consideration, he resolved on visiting Rome; and the execution of his project followed close upon its conception. Friendless, if not hopeless, he began this journey in his twentieth year;‡ leaving Naples with such heart-burnings of deep-seated indignation, as those only feel, who, loving their native land, are driven from it by a neglect, which no triumph of foreign suffrages can ever obliterate or assuage.

In catching a last view of the paradise he was leaving, he is said to have shed tears. For Salvator, like all persons of genius not early corrupted, was a patriot; and his frequent returns to his worthless country, debased as it was by ages of political degradation, attest the love he bore it. But if "some natural tears he dropped," tears soon dry at twenty: and while he trod, step by step, that Appian Way, of which Horace had bequeathed him the poetical topography, his spirits rallied; and the images of the antique

* "Trovossi egli colla madre col restante della famiglia, in *miserabilissimo* stato ed oltremodo afflitto dalle miserie, fino à mancargli il necessario sostentamento, nel tempo appunto in cui maggiori abbisognavagli i comodi, e la quiete per attendere agli studj!!"—*Vita di Salvator Rosa, tratta da vari Autori.*

† "Parendogli di far torto al suo nome, tenerlo ristretto e fra le mure di Napoli, voleva farlo noto anche fuori, e trasferre à Roma."—*Pascoli.*

‡ In the year 1634-5.

world, which rose in sublime succession on his view, from Capo da Chino to the Porta San Giovanni, in awakening the classical associations of his well-furnished memory, opened new sources of moral and graphic combinations to his vigorous and reproductive imagination.*

Salvator, like Horace, performed the greater part of this journey on foot; and he is said to have arrived under the mouldering walls of Rome, in much the same plight as Bernardo Tasso had done before him, who entered "La grande Roma" with two shirts under one arm, and his "Amadigi" under the other. The whole wardrobe of Salvator was strapped to his back, and his whole fortunes deposited in the portfolio which gave it balance.

In entering the greatest city of the world at the Ave Maria, the hour of Italian recreation,—in passing from the silent desolate suburbs of San Giovanni to the Corso, (then a place of crowded and populous resort,) where the princes of the Conclave presented themselves in all the pomp and splendour of Oriental satraps,—the feelings of the young and solitary stranger must have suffered a revulsion, in the consciousness of his own misery. Never, perhaps, in the deserts of the Abruzzi, in the solitudes of Otranto, or in the ruins of Pæstum, did Salvator experience sensations of such utter loneliness, as in the midst of this gaudy and multitudinous assemblage; for in the history of melancholy sensations there are few comparable to that sense of isolation, to that desolateness of soul, which accompanies the first entrance of the friendless on a world where all, *save they*, have ties, pursuits, and homes.

With none to receive and none to direct him, Salvator, guided by the instincts of poverty, retraced his steps from this gay quarter of the city, and sought one of those dreary "inns in the suburbs, many of which are formed out of the tombs of antiquity, affording an asylum, and but an asylum, to the indigent living."† Shortly afterwards Milton arrived

* Of this first visit to Rome, Passeri, whose acquaintance with Rosa did not take place till some years afterwards, makes no mention: all his other biographers allude to it.

† "La voie Appienne, abandonnée aujourd'hui, dans la partie qui conduit de Rome à Albane, sur une longueur de trois lieues, n'est plus qu'une ligne droite tracée par deux files de tombeaux ruinés qui semblent se toucher. J'en trace qui sont devenus des Cabarets."—*Bonstetten, Voyage dans le Latium.*

in Rome, under very different circumstances. *He* was received by the learned and the noble, "with the greatest humanity." Sonnets and distichs in his honour poured forth from the Roman muse; and Cardinal Barberini came forward to the door of his apartment to receive him, as princes only are received.

Milton and Salvator, who, in genius, character, and political views, bore no faint resemblance to each other, though living at the same time both in Rome and Naples, remained mutually unknown. The obscure and indigent young painter had, doubtless, no means of presenting himself to the great republican poet of England—if indeed he had then ever heard of one, so destined to illustrate the age in which both flourished.

In the early period of the seventeenth century, Rome, in preserving some of the exterior forms of her ancient grandeur, had lost the substance of that power which, partly derived from spiritual authority and partly from temporal dominion, had once nearly subjugated Europe, and paved the way to an universal monarchy of her pontiffs. In one half of the Christian world the power of Rome was now contemned; and if in the other half the head of the Roman Church was venerated as a father, there were those among his children who resisted him with reason and with success. Struggling for prerogatives once regarded as inalienable rights, upholding jurisdictions which many considered but as long-established abuses, the representatives of St. Peter continued to exhibit some semblance of their former supremacy; and by much pretension, deep policy, exquisite suppleness, and unwearied patience, they hid from the world, if not from themselves, the decay of their influence and the precariousness of their sway. All the Catholic kings, on their accession, still sent ambassadors to Rome, who were called "*di obediienza*," or of obedience. Every Catholic crown in Europe was represented by a member of the Conclave, who took the name of protector. The high society of the Christian metropolis consisted almost exclusively of these foreign ambassadors and the connexions and followers of the "*Dei Cardinaloni*;"* and the intrigues of the Conclave,† the disputes for precedence, and personal quarrels

* De Retz.

† Called by De Retz, "*les finoteries du Conclave*."

of the diplomatic coteries,* afforded the only disturbance that broke upon the monumental tranquillity of the "Eternal City;" which the institutes of a fatal religion were rapidly depopulating, and which a resistance to the progressive improvements of the age, was separating from all European interests and illumination.

For the rest, Rome enjoyed a profound peace; and while the vilest corruption existed in the morals of the people under a neglected internal police and the worst of domestic governments, the increasing passion for luxury and show, in the idle and worthless princes, and in the sumptuous and ambitious cardinals,† united with public tranquillity to favour the arts, and to render Rome under Urban VIII., as she had been under Julius II., the great studio of Europe.

Maffeo Barberini, who in 1623 was elected pope under the title of Urban VIII., was in the full flower of his age, when Salvator Rosa arrived for the first time within view of the cupola of St. Peter's. Urban was a mere domestic Pope; bustling and interfering at home, but confining all his views abroad to the preservation of peace. He viewed with selfish indifference, or sought only to remove by fasts and prayers imposed on the people, the horrible ravages of famine and pestilence, which raged in the Roman States during the greater part of his reign. But he was full of active solicitude to provide against the probable attacks of his powerful neighbours, by fortifying the Quirinal, and furnishing the Vatican with an arsenal for four legions, destined to guard his infallible person. Cautiously avoiding European politics, he directed all his views to Church diplomacy. He suppressed the female Jesuits (1631), gave the cardinals the title of "Eminence," conferred on the Capuchins that of the "true sons of St. Francis," published a solemn bull against snuff-taking in church, and by his poetical effusions became the magnus Apollo of the ante-chambers of the Quirinal, where admiring Camerlinghi and

* The factions of Spain and France, headed by their respective Cardinal Protectors, kept up a sort of civil war in the heart of the city, in which "aigreurs et niaiserie" (ill-nature and silly rivalry) were accompanied by open murders and secret assassinations.

† Cardinal de Retz, though in exile, was obliged to put eighty servants in livery, in order that he might not be "sur le pied des plus gueux des Cardinaux-moines," who could not go with less than this "Livrée roulante" to any of the functions.

obsequious Monsignori assigned him the adjunctive appellation of "the Attic bee."* But the passion of the pontifical poet for writing odes to Saints, and epigrams on sinners, did not interfere with his devotion to the arts, respecting which he was a true Barberini. An inordinate influx of wealth into the coffers of this powerful family, for which there were no other employments than the erection of palaces and villas, or the collection of works of art to adorn them, had rendered this family the titular patrons of most of the living artists; and the purchase which they had made of the ancient fief of Palestrina (the site of the wars of Sylla) from the illustrious but declining house of Colonna, had opened a new source of *virtù* to Italian *cognoscenti*. The excavations also carried on by the Barberini at Palestrina,† and the Mosaics found there, (the commencement of their celebrated collection,) had awakened in the wealthiest members of the family a passion for the arts, which reflected on almost all the living artists of the age.

The elevation of a Barberini to the pontifical throne was, therefore, supposed to promise "un secolo oro per la pittura" (a golden age for painting); and the aspiring artists of the times, untaught by the melancholy fate of the Caracci, looked up to the protection of a particular family for that fortune which the suffrages of a public should alone bestow. Patronage, substituted for opinion, produced dependence, and palsied competition; and the exclusive influence of the Pope, cardinals, and princes of the Barberini family, threw the destiny of the arts into the hands of one, whose mediocrity and inordinate personal vanity rendered him the least proper for so arduous and important a situation.

Lorenzo Bernino, or Bernini, the son of a Florentine artist, a Neapolitan by birth, a sculptor, architect, and painter by profession,‡ was one of those extraordinary instances of precocity which never fail to astonish the shal-

* The "Poemata Maffei Barberini" are now little known, and are rarely to be found, except in a Roman library. "Nous avons de lui (Urban VIII.) un gros recueil de vers latins : et il faut avouer que l'Arioste et le Tasse ont mieux réussi."—*Voltaire*.

† It was in these excavations that the Portland Vase was found, so long the ornament of the Barberini palace at Rome.

‡ He was born in 1598. His picture by Leone, done in his twenty-fifth year, exhibits him as a well-looking youth, with a certain air of audacity and self-possession extremely illustrative of his character.

low, which frequently impose on the profound, and which seldom realise in their maturity the promise of the premature excellence of their youth. A head sculptured by the clever boy at twelve years old, and placed by the vanity of his father for exhibition in the church of Santa Prassede at Rome, excited much attention; and Pope Paul V. (a Borghese) was talked into a curiosity to see the ingenious child. Presented at the Vatican, the little artist was ordered by the Pope, "by way of a joke," ("come per ischerzo,") says Bellori, to draw him a head with a pen. "What head would you have?" asked the unabashed boy. "Nay," said the Pope, "if I am only to ask and have, give me a St. Paul." A beau ideal of the head of St. Paul was sketched with rapidity; and whatever was its merit, it was finished "con sommo diletto e maraviglia del Papa"—"to the great content and wonder of his Holiness." The fortune of a boy, who could delight and astonish a Pope, was thus laid upon the broad and sure foundation of all fortunes in Rome. The Pope, as the price of a miracle by which he was so largely benefited, filled the hands of the tiny artist with golden medals; and, giving him up to the care of Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, said, in the child's hearing, "Speriamo che questo giovinetto debbe diventare il Michelagnolo del secolo"—"Let us hope that this boy will become the Michael Angelo of the age." The prophecy was sufficient to defeat itself; and Bernini, beginning where he should have ended, became the greatest coxcomb, if not the greatest genius of his time. Dandled by cardinals, bequeathed as a legacy from pope to pope, adulated by the dependants of the Conclave, and eulogized by all the poets of the day, the young Bernini received a little fortune for every bust he executed, at the same age at which Guido was grateful to his patron (a tailor) for six scudi given him for one of his divine heads: yet, in the eyes of posterity, what a distance between Guido and Bernini!

The accession of Maffeo Barberini to the pontifical throne crowned the fortunes of the lucky Lorenzo;* and one of the first acts of Urban VIII. was to create his favourite

* When Bernini presented himself to Urban, a few days after his elevation, the Pope addressed him in the following flattering manner: "E' gran fortuna la vostra Bernini, di vedere Papa il Card. Maffeo Barberini; ma assai maggiore è la nostra, che il Caval. Bernini viva nel nostro pontificato."—"It is a singular piece of good fortune for you, Bernini, to behold Maffeo

(already made a Knight of the Holy Roman Empire by Gregory XV.) architect to the Basilicum of St. Peter. His pensions were at the same time enormously increased, and his two brothers were collated to benefices in the Lateran and St. Peter's. Diligent as he was ambitious, his indefatigable vanity led him to apply himself to all the arts. While he wrote childish verses with the Pope, whose ambition aimed at *blue* stockings no less than *red*, he pursued architecture, sculpture, and painting, with contemporary success,* far more brilliant than had ever been obtained by the more powerful and concentrated geniuses who had preceded him. A fawning courtier in the saloons of princes, Bernini was at Rome, like Lebrun in Paris, a tyrant to the arts. He saw no merit in the artist who did not bow down before the throne to which fashion and patronage had raised him. His disciples were his slaves; and of the many who sought his notice, few derived substantial benefits from his patronage; while years of anxious expectation and pining servitude were for the most part repaid only by a conviction of the fallacy of waiting on the capricious favour of a man whom fortune had spoiled, and whose overweening vanity obscured his better judgment, and lessened the value of his talents.

When Salvator Rosa arrived at Rome, his prosperous countryman was in all the first flush of triumph at the completion and success of his great work, the Baldichino of St. Peter's,† which had cost the State for gilding alone, an

Barberini Pope, but much more so for us to have Bernini living in our pontificate."—See *Bellori*.

There was a period, says Sir J. Reynolds, when to name Vandyke in competition with Kneller was to incur contempt. The character of the eighteenth century in England resembled that of the seventeenth in Italy. It was the age of English mediocrity, the reaction of that powerful burst of national genius developed by the civil wars and the revolution.

* Louis XIV. invited Bernini to France, from which the ill-requited Poussin was so happy to escape. Bernini had, during his residence in Paris, five *louis* a day, five thousand crowns as a *cadeau*, a pension of two thousand for himself and five hundred for his son; yet the designs he made for the Louvre were never made use of. This idle prodigality of kings is the result more of ignorance than of vice. If they usually know little of the arts, they are even still less aware of the value of money.

† The materials were torn from the Pantheon,—that Pantheon which M. Angelo would have deemed it sacrilege to touch! The difference between this Baldichino and the Cupola of St. Peter's gives the precise difference

hundred thousand golden scudi, and which was exposed to the public on the feast of St. Peter, with religious pomp and dramatic effect. The splendid school of the Caracci had passed, or was passing away. Domenichino was living in solitude in the shades of Frascati, preparatory to his second fatal journey to Naples. Lanfranco was still in Naples, whence he only returned to die. Guido, whose morbid sensibility had been wounded to the quick by his would-be protector Cardinal Spinola, had recently left Rome in disgust, and had retired to his native Bologna; where in his old age he enjoyed that noble independence he had struggled so hard through the precarious fortunes of his youth to obtain. Caravaggio had long before met his frightful death in the deserts of the Pontine Marshes. The great passions which had animated these lofty geniuses were stilled; and the energizing warfare of contending talents was succeeded by the blasting influence of patronage and the degrading arts of intrigue.

With much the same influence on the arts as their barbarous ancestors had exerted on the manners and habits of the Mistress of the world, "Gli Oltramontani," more generally known in Europe by the generic name of the Flemish School, had at this time acquired a celebrity in Rome. "Quel genere baronesco," as an Italian writer of the seventeenth century contemptuously denotes this school, included a race of painters, who, issuing from the coarsest ranks of society in France,* Holland, Flanders, and the Low Countries, came to study in the galleries of Rome; and returned to their native homes† as little tinctured by the beau ideal of the sublime Roman masters in their works, as in their

between the genius of Bernini and of M. Angelo; yet the latter died possessed of a bare sufficiency, and the former worth two millions. Bernini's fame fell with the age which gave it birth; and as an artist, the Italians of the present day place him in the same line with his friend Marino as a poet. The Baldichino, however, the Daphne and Apollo, the fountain of the Piazza Navona, and the noble Colonnade of the Vatican, are testimonies of a talent sufficient to justify the regret that its possessor should have descended to those littlenesses, which should only belong to envious mediocrity.

* The French artists, though included in the term "Oltramontani," and though they deviated in many respects from the purity of the Italian schools, are not to be confounded with their Dutch and Flemish neighbours, either in respect of manners or style. This looseness of the Italian epithet tends to confound under one name things essentially distinct.

† With very few exceptions, of which Vandyke is the most conspicuous.

character and habits they were touched by the refinement of Italian manners.

Between the passionate, imaginative, and high-toned beings who filled the superior ranks of the arts in Italy, and the significantly named *Oltramontani* there existed the same disparity in point of morals as in their respective styles of painting. The "*Aurora*" of Guido and the "*Fish-wife*" of Durer, the grand action of Domenichino's painted Epics and the interior of Teniers's Pot-houses, the heaven that looked from the eyes of Raphael's "*Saint Cecilia*" and the oblique glance of *Wander's* grotesque *Bambocciate*, were not more contrasted than the views, thoughts, and manners of men, who equally saw Nature in all her truth, but saw her under different impressions, and seized her in different aspects.

The cause in which painting was first engaged in Italy, had given an holy elevation to all that issued from its great schools: and those brilliant and lofty imaginations, which had dared to conceive and to represent the Divine presence, and which went no lower in the scale of creation than to paint those "*middle spirits*"

"Between th' angelic and the human kind,"

could see no merit in the well-depicted viscera of a dead fish, or the disgusting details of a slaughter-house; while from the exhibition of the moral vices of the lowest of the people, or the infirmities and deformities of physical nature, however exquisitely or faithfully delineated, they turned revolted and abashed.* The manners and customs of the two Schools effected a still wider separation between their members. The Italian artists were elegant voluptuaries; more fastidious than intemperate, gallantry to excess was their master-vice; and their villas, their gardens, their superb costume, the care lavished on their persons, of whose beauty posterity may still judge in the galleries of Rome, Florence, and Bologna, were all rendered conducive to their dominant passion, to which religion herself stands indebted for the *Magdalens* and *Madonnas* with which love furnished her altars and her shrines.

* The remark of Sir J. Reynolds, "that the character of a nation is more marked by its taste in painting than by any other pursuit, however considerable," is here strictly applicable.

The vice of the Oltramontani was that most opposed to gallantry—drunkenness;* and the quaint picture of these painters, left by the worshipper of Domenichino, illustrates at the same moment their habits, so new to Rome, and the impression they made on the fastidious minds of the Italian artists.† But while the Italians were loud and open in their expressions of disgust, not only at the brutal manners, but at the low, gross, and vile subjects which the Flemish School was introducing into the arts, (“subjects,” says one of their body, “which may amuse the people, but can never touch souls elevated by one noble idea,”) this new style was received with universal approbation by the public. It was *new*, and it was *nature*; and the sympathies of the people were all in unison with its coarse but faithful and admirable representations of the scenes in which they most delighted, and the habits with which they were most familiar. Even the great caught the infection. The “stilo Bambocciato”

* Salvator Rosa alludes to the drunkenness of the English and German artists in more places than one in his Satires.

“Imbriacar gli Inglese e gli Alemanni

Con il vino non già, &c. &c. &c.

* * * * *

Andar con quei Fiaminghi alla Taverna

Che profanando in un la terra e l' Etere,

Han trovato un batismo alla moderna.”

† “At this time” (says Passeri) “the Ultramontanes, according to their different nations, assembled together, the French with the French, the Dutch with the Dutch, the Flemish with the Flemish: and when money was rife, and one of their countrymen arrived at Rome, he was obliged to invite the whole band of his compatriots to a sumptuous feast, given at some of the most celebrated taverns. To these feasts every one contributed his share, though the novice was the principal paymaster. The recreation lasted twenty-four hours, at the least, without the parties leaving the table; for the wine was brought to them in hogsheads. This brawl they were wont to call the baptism. Their indiscretion in giving this holy appellation to their festivity arose from the circumstance of a new name being affixed on the novice, generally derived from some peculiarity in his face, figure, or demeanour. Peter Wander, who was ill-proportioned, was christened the *Bamboccio*, by which name he was ever after called.”

Salvator Rosa has left on poetical record, not only his contempt for the vices, but for the ignorance and bad taste of these men, and his indignation at their having vitiated and degraded the noblest of the arts.

“Mira con quanti obbrobrj e quanti eccessi

Dagli artefici propri oggi s' oscura

Il più chiaro mestier che si professi.”

La Pittura.

became a fashionable caprice, and the superb galleries of princes and pontiffs were "infected with these *vilenesses*, fit only for pot-houses and taverns."* Interest, with its ever sure instincts, soon directed the talents, which were to live by the public, to the public predilections; and as many of the Italian artists as were not devoted to the manner of Raphael and the Caracci, or had not swelled the train of Bernini, became imitators of the Flemish School, and disciples and followers of Wander, and of Miele, at that epoch the most popular of its chiefs.†

From the followers of Bernini and the school of the Oltramontani, Salvator Rosa stood equally aloof. To have added his distich or sonnet to the tributary effusions offered to the "arbitero delle belle arti," the arbiter of the fine arts of the day,—to have joined the drunken brawls and rude wassailage of the Ultramontanes,—and to have employed a pencil, consecrated by Nature to her highest sublimity, upon the coarse delineation of vulgar life, would have been to follow the common path: but Salvator was not only morally, but physically, incapacitated for such a course; and his ardent temperament and contemplative mind still hurried him to objects consonant to the impulses of the one and the combinations of the other. Having visited the churches and galleries,‡ and, with his usual

* "E questi quadri son tanto apprezzati
Che si vedon de' grandi entro gli studj
Di superbi ornamenti incorniciati."

La Pittura.

To this Passeri adds his prosaic and indignant testimony. "Non restavano però costoro di infettare alcune gallerie digne di gran personaggi con quelle viltà, che erano soltanto proprie da casali e da camere di locande."—*Vita di Gion. Miele.*

† This embraces the whole secret. The Flemish painters (some blameable excesses of ill-taste apart) painted those objects which will ever be most interesting to nations who can boast of "a people;" subjects which, while they "prate of the whereabout" of real life, and call on the sympathies of the fathers and husbands of the laborious classes, are much better adapted for the small apartments of this portion of society, than historical pictures. It may be added, that dead fish and dead game are at least not more offensive objects for familiar contemplation than murdered saints and tortured martyrs. Both schools had reason on their side; but neither, perhaps, could place itself in the proper situation for judging dispassionately of the other.

‡ "Comincia subito a andar vedendo le maravigliose pitture, e sculture, che in ricca copia l' adornano (Roma) &c. &c. &c."—*Pascoli.*

impetuosity, decided at once in favour of Michael Angelo and Titian,* in whom he found nature and truth undisfigured by the ignorant anachronisms which shocked him even in the pictures of Raphael, he gave up his days and his nights to Ancient Rome. He was wont to climb the loneliest and the loftiest of her seven hills, and from the summit of Mount Aventine to sketch some great feature of desolation which the Rome of the Cæsars presented to his pencil. He loitered long and often in that noxious but interesting suburb, where stand in singular opposition the temple of Vesta and the house of Cola di Rienzi. He wandered along the infected shores of the Tiber, and kept pace with the fearful and wretched galley-slaves, who dragged some crazy vessel through the muddy stream, freighted with filthy rags (then the only exportation of the "World's great Mistress"); he visited those deserts into which the Porta Leone (the Trigemina of antiquity) conducts,—a spot consecrated to melancholy meditation, where the tomb of C. Cestius and the vast unfrequented Basilicon of St. Paul † seem to rise as landmarks of time on the boundaries of desolation. He penetrated mouldering ruins, and plunged into noxious excavations, insensible during

* Notwithstanding his great admiration of the genius of Michael Angelo, he disapproved of the *conception* of the Last Judgment, as not being sufficiently sublime; though the manner in which it was executed rendered it in his eyes a school of study. He has on this subject given his opinion freely in one of his Satires, for he never seems to have been daunted by a name, however great; nor dazzled by an authority, however antiquated.¹

Michel Angelo mio, non parlo in gioco;
Questo che dipingete è un gran Giudizio,
Ma del giudizio voi n'avete poco.

My Michael Angelo, I do not jest,
Thy pencil a great judgment has express'd;
But in that judgment, thou, alas! hast shown
But very little judgment of thine own!!

Salvator Rosa, la Pittura.

† Since the above was written, this most ancient and interesting church has been destroyed by an accidental fire, and its immense riches in antique marbles utterly lost.

¹ The nudity of the figures in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment had been objected to by a contemporary critic; and Michael Angelo's own friend, Lodovico Dolce, in his Dialogue on Painting, attacked him on this point with unsparing severity. Roscoe censures this accusation of Salvator's as hypercritical.

the day to the effects of his perilous enterprise, but devoured by night, on returning to his dreary inn, by a parching fever, the inevitable consequence of that indiscretion which had exposed him to the malaria of the infected suburbs of Rome.

The rapid, but bold and splendid sketches he struck off at this period, were disposed of in the Piazza Navona, once the Circus of the Agonalia, and "now," says Evelyn (a contemporary of Salvator's), "a mercat for medals, pictures, and curiosities;" or were sold or pledged to the Jews* of the Ghetto, then the mart of all brokerage and usury: for it appears that works bearing no name of fashionable notoriety were as little estimated in Rome as in Naples. To the ineffectual struggles which Salvator at this period made for a bare and miserable existence, he has himself unequivocally alluded in a cantata, which, though dashed with a splenetic humour and a caustic pleasantry, is still a feeling and a fearful picture of the trials to which genius and sensibility are exposed from their false position in an ill-organized society, founded on principles discordant with themselves, and at variance with the interests and the happiness of man. †

CANTATA BY SALVATOR ROSA.

TRANSLATED.

No truce from care, no pause from woe,
 Fortune,—for ever still my foe,
 Seems not to know or to remember
 I live and feel in every member;—
 Am nerve, flesh, spirit, pulse, and core,
 And throb and ache at every pore.
 Yet from my first-drawn sigh, through life,
 I've waged with fate eternal strife;
 Have toil'd without reward or gain,
 And woo'd the arts—but woo'd in vain.
 For, while to Hope I fondly trust,
 I scarce can earn my daily crust.
 For me bright suns but vainly shine,
 In vain the earth yields corn and wine.

* Baldinucci.

† Burney calls this poem a gloomy and grumbling history of this painter's life, in which the comic exaggeration is not unpleasant. The music to which it is set, with the exception of the *refrain*, which is measured melody, is recitative. It is the composition of Bandini.

Whene'er of peace I idly dream,
 Discord is sure to rule supreme;
 Ventures my little bark to sea?
 Up springs a storm express for me;
 My drench'd sails should I spread to dry,
 Down pours a deluge from the sky:
 Nay, should I seek those Indian plains
 Whose sands are gold,—for all my pains,
 I'd find transmuted into lead
 The ore of the rich river's bed.
 When driv'n by Nature's pinching wants,
 In the *Mercato's* coarse throng'd haunts
 I higgling stand, spite of all care
 I'm juggled of my frugal fare,
 And find (my hard-made bargain done)
 My pound of flesh, a pound of bone.
 If forced I seek the princely state,
 The domes of those we call the Great,
 Corruption's self my bribes will slight,
 And find my *buona mano* light.
 While, as I saunter through the court,
 I grow the jesting page's sport;
 For threadbare cloaks meet no respect,
 And challenge only cold neglect.
 Out on my cloak! the very Jews
 To take the paltry pledge refuse;
 In every stall its credit's blown,
 To the whole Ghetto too well known;
 And they who buy all ends and fags
 Will not accept my well worn rags!
 By night, by day, my harass'd mind
 No rest, no peace, no balm can find.
 My waking thoughts are thoughts of care;
 My night-dreams—castles in the air!
 While all around is pomp and state,
 The meanest vessel gold, or plate,
 No rood in country, shed in town,
 Could I, alas! e'er call my own:
 Rich but in hope, and when that's fled,
 An hospital reserves its bed.
 In summer, when the dog-star glows,
 I'm dress'd as though the Tiber froze.
 For this you'll guess the ready reason—
 I've but one suit for every season.
 Yet, could I earn my daily pittance,
 Fortune, I'd make thee an acquaintance;
 I prize not toys, which ne'er should find
 A place within the noble mind.
 But my most ample means are scant
 To meet life's simplest, humblest want.
 Great God! yet "I'm a painter too,"
 And can I find no cheering hue

To tinge this darksome sketch of life,
Where all is effort, evil, strife.
Oh no! one sombre tint pervades,
My verdure browns, my sunbeam shades,
Shed o'er my scenes eternal gloom,
And dims their lights and chills their bloom.
Yet when my frozen spirits play,
And fancy lends a genial ray,
My pencil in its wanton sport
Brings the well-freighted bark to port;
Bestows fair sites on whom I please,
Raises rich leafy woods with ease;
But, of such varied wealth the maker,
I work and starve without an acre.
Success, pursued, still seems to fly,
Hope's smile has still its kindred sigh;
Youth's joys are dull'd, its visions flown,
Yet friends still cry, "Hope and work on;"
"Hope still, starve still:"—to say the best,
This counsel's but a sorry jest;
For, take it on Salvator's word,
Of the rich, noble, vulgar herd,
Few estimate, and few require,
The painter's zeal, the poet's fire.
The surest road to recompense
Is to conceal superior sense.
Better, far better meet our doom,
And sleep within the peaceful tomb,
Than cursed with wit, sense, worth, and spirit,
To trust to industry and merit—
Than live a beggar and a slave,
The scorn of every fool and knave.

The doom which the unfortunate painter so impatiently anticipated in this wild and melancholy production, was now apparently hastening to its crisis. The mental energy which had hitherto sustained him, sunk under the influence of physical infirmity; and the dreadful malady inflicted by the malaria, which had long preyed on his vigorous constitution, now stretched him senseless on his dreary couch. Friendless, penniless, and obscure, it is probable that he owed the medical attentions which saved his life to one of the charitable institutions with which Rome abounds, and which arise out of that abuse which necessitates their existence. The "hospital bed" reserved for unprosperous genius, to which Salvator alludes, sanctions this melancholy supposition, though none of his biographers assert the fact. His life was preserved; but of his restoration to perfect

health no hope was given, but from the healing balm of his native air.* As soon as he was enabled to encounter the fatigue of the journey, he left Rome, more depressed in spirit and in circumstances than he had entered it. He had at least left Naples with hope and with health; he now returned to it blasted in both.

CHAPTER V.

1635—1639.

ON reaching the threshold of his native city, Salvator found that he had no longer, even there, a shed that he might call his own. His little family was dispersed under the exigencies of their necessitous position. His mother had been charitably received under the indigent roof of her brother, Paolo Grecco;† and Francanzani and his wife were steeped deep in miseries, which hurried on the fate of that eminent genius, by plunging him into excesses, for which his despair was alone perhaps accountable.‡ Stunned as the susceptible mind of Salvator must have been by such an accumulation of evil, he yet attempted to parry the mass of affliction, which was inclosing him on every side, by the powerful resistance of genius energized by affection. He entered with fresh zeal upon the art he was almost on the point of abandoning in utter hopelessness, and applied himself once more with cheerful§ and laborious diligence to his easel.

* “Fu assalito da una continua febbre, per liberarsi dal quale gli fu d'uopo tornare a respirare l'aria nativa.”—*Vita di S. Rosa*.

† “Giulia Grecca la sua madre, che ritirata s'era col fratello pittore per vivere.”—*Pascoli*.

‡ Reduced to despair, Francanzani became careless of his art, and painted only for the common people, and in the coarsest manner. At last, becoming guilty of some capital crime (rio da morte), he was condemned to death; but he was not publicly executed, being poisoned in the dungeons of the Castello Nuovo, out of respect for the profession (per rispetto al professione). The crime of which he was accused remains as mysterious as its punishment. It was probably political, as he was engaged in the conspiracy of Masaniello.—See *Lanzi, Ticozzi, &c.*

§ “Allegramente,” is the phrase applied by Pascoli to the cheeriness of spirit with which he resumed his profession at Naples.

Triumphant in Salvator's failure at Rome, but annoyed at his return, the whole profession in Naples, with the exception of Falcone, rose against him. The freedom with which he still discussed the works of the mannerists ("manieristi"), the epigram couched in every remark that dropped from his lips or his pen, kept alive the hatred which his uncompromising spirit had awakened, and which in all his poverty shamed the servility of the "*dependants*" of the art,* who had not blushed to assume an appellation which generically marked their degradation.† All his efforts to obtain an adequate price for his incomparable works were now unavailing; and after a fruitless struggle, all means of subsistence from the exertion of his splendid talents seemed wholly to vanish.

That his countryman Tasso had died in an hospital, afforded perhaps no solace, though it lent a precedent to the unfortunate Rosa, for the insufficiency of mere genius to succeed, in countries under the yoke of particular institutions. Thinking deeply, as men will think who feel strongly;‡ environed on every side by importunate but successful mediocrity; beholding vice always prosperous, and crime secure of impunity, when protected by the garb of religion, or robed in the ermine of state, he took, even at this early period of life, his bitter but just view of society, which no after-prosperity could obliterate. In what deep characters this experience was engraven, his grand but terrible pictures, his severe but merited satires, evince.

The youth, the health, the spirits of Salvator were now fast yielding to the conviction of neglected merit and unavailing worth—the most insupportable of all inflictions—when an event occurred, which, though the least connected in appearance with a destiny so obscure, rescued him from despair, and threw a gleam of sunshine on the gloomy perspective of his future life. Francesco Maria Brancaccia, a noble Neapolitan and Bishop of Capaccio, was among the numerous cardinals created by Pope Urban VIII.; and being obliged by his promotion to attend the Court of

* "In Napoli poco migliorò la sua fortuna, anzi, contrariato da quei pittori de' quali come troppo loquace di soverchio parlava, gli mancarono intieramente le occasioni di lavorare."—*Vita di S. Rosa*.

† The disciples of Spagnuololetto were called "Suoi Dependenti."

‡ "Les grandes pensées viennent toujours du cœur."—*Voltaire*.

Rome, and form an establishment upon that princely scale, of whose extravagance Cardinal de Retz so grievously complains, he sent to Naples for a young ecclesiastic, a dependent of his house, to take charge of his household ("La Famiglia"), and to fill the office, at that time so important in Rome, of Maestro di Casa to a prince of the Church. The young Padre Girolamo Mercuri had been a fellow-student with Salvator at the Collegio Somasco, and was then, as ever after, the most enthusiastic of his admirers. But, poor and dependent himself, his admiration hitherto had been as profitless as it was ardent.

His promotion, however, to the dignity of first domestic in the household of a "gran porporato" (a situation coveted by ecclesiastics of much higher rank than that of the unbeneficed Girolamo), was an unexpected influx of fortune, whose tide he generously sought to turn to the purposes of friendship. He invited Salvator to accompany him to Rome, and held out such inducements to his hopeless countryman, as easily persuaded him to try once more his fortune in the great European market of the arts. In company with some other young Neapolitan adventurers, Rosa embarked on board a felucca, and in the latter end of the year 1635 returned to Rome. There, however, he no longer found himself a friendless stranger. Kind arms were now extended to receive him; and an hospitable roof afforded him at least a temporary shelter.*

Girolamo Mercuri, who is described as one "chi fu sempre uomo onorato ed amorevole," (who was always an honourable and benevolent man,) was not the only friend whom Salvator found in the Brancaccia palace. The Cardinal's guardaroba, Signor Nicola Simonelli, an ecclesiastic and noted preacher of the day, was also a Neapolitan; and from

* Of the circumstances of this second journey to Rome, Pascoli seems as ignorant as Passeri was of the first. His account of Salvator at this period is, that he arrived at Rome, for the second time, in his twenty-fourth year, and painted already "da Maestro:" but not having any introduction, he was obliged to sell his pictures to brokers and petty shopkeepers, who seeing the genius displayed in these exquisite productions, and observing that their author was unknown and without funds, contrived to conceal his very existence, till Salvator, discovering the artifice, made himself known, by entering the service of the Cardinal Brancaccia. Passeri's account, however; who appears to have made the acquaintance of Salvator about this time, may be received in preference.

the moment of his introduction to his ingenious countryman, he became, in the technical language of the times, "suo parziale," (his protector or partisan). It appears that the excellent Girolamo Mercuri not only received Salvator with "carezze grandi," but assigned him an apartment in the vast palace of his master, which perhaps even then, as in the present day, might have been but half inhabited, and capable of sheltering, unknown to its lord, many houseless and indigent refugees.

The image of Salvator now presents itself, as of one occupying a remote and deserted room marked by a faded and dreary splendour, and destitute of all comfort and accommodation. Labouring with unabated, though as yet unrequited, diligence, he was obliged to recur to his own fine and flexible figure, reflected in a large dusky mirror, for the models he was unable to procure.* He was not, however, the less devoured by an ambition for distinction; and he worked not less to obtain a name, than to supply the exigencies of the passing day ("tanto per cagione di vivere, quanto per introdursi nelle cognizione di tutti"). But it was in vain that he produced those beautiful cabinet-pictures called his "quadretti," fine combinations of that vast stock of imagery he had accumulated in his peripatetic study of nature, and animated them by living figures full of moral effect and human interest. His galley-slaves, his bandits, his way-worn travellers, his shipwrecked mariners, his armed cavaliers, though allowed to be executed "di buono gusto" by contemporary umpires, were still deemed in themselves ignoble subjects by the academic pedantry of one class of virtuosi; while by another class, who saw no merit beyond the delineation of a Dutch kitchen, or a market brawl, they were censured as wild and extravagant.† The friends of Salvator in vain recommended to him the usual routine which led to fashion and success in Rome, and advised him to enter one of the reigning schools of the day, to enlist himself under the banners of Andrea

* Baldinucci asserts he never after made use of any other model for his male figures: the grace, spirit, and mobility of his own were all-sufficient.

† "Erano però, figurine piccole, e tele non molto grandi toccate mirabilmente con tinte grate e di buon gusto, ma di soggetti vili, cioè baroni, galeotti, e marinari."—*Passeri*.

Sacchi, Pietro Cortona, Nicolas Poussin, or, greater than all, the Cavalier Bernini!

At this period many of the galleries of the virtuosi and of the leading artists were open during the winter evenings to the young students of Rome. They were effectively lighted, and supplied with living models; and to the congress of students thus assembled, the name of "accademia" was given. Domenichino had first introduced this mode in Rome for the benefit of his own pupils; and Nicolas Poussin and other foreign artists had been proud to avail themselves of the advantage of working under the eye of the greatest painter of the age. Since the fortunes of Domenichino had "fallen into the sear," and he had taken up his residence in Naples, the most fashionable accademia in Rome was the studio of Andrea Sacchi, where a certain "Caporale Leone," a military Apollo, and a living rival of *him of the Belvidere*, presented one of the finest models, for the grace and spirit of his attitudes, that art had ever studied. But Salvator frequented none of these associations, which belonged more to the pretensions of the modern school, than to the genius of the old masters. When not shut up in his solitary workroom in the Brancaccia palace, he was transfixed in the Sistine chapel before the gigantic splendours of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. This he was wont to call his school of anatomy; and though enthusiastic in his admiration for Titian's colouring, the genius of Michael Angelo was that with which his own alone associated. If he followed any school save that of Nature, it was the school of this his great prototype, whose "Three Fates" in the Palace Pitti at Florence, might pass for the "Weird Sisters" of Shakspeare, or "The Sorceresses" of Salvator Rosa.

While all the artists of the age were following particular masters, or copying each other, Salvator added one rule to that catalogue which they venerated, and he despised,—that is, not to be confined to any rule: and his pictures exhibited in the shops of the Roman *rivenditori*, while they startled the precise judgments of professional critics, obliged them to invent a specific term for such unauthorized and eccentric productions: they called them his "Capricci." If, as it is observed by one whose opinions on the arts are

oracular, "if the very foundation of the art of painting be invention, and if he who most excels in that high quality must be allowed to be the greatest painter, in what degree soever he may be surpassed by others in the more inferior branches of the art,"* Salvator Rosa, even at this period, when he was known only by the ludicrous appellation of "Il Salvatoriello," was one of the *first*, because one of the most original painters of his age or country.

But whatever were the professional merits of Rosa, he, in an eminent degree, wanted the more appreciable personal merit of *ductility*. He neither would nor could (says one of his biographers) "accommodarsi al corteggio delle anticamere"—"submit himself to the dangling in antechambers"—and his stiff and unbending temper left him, after some months' residence in Rome, without so much patronage as would procure him the painting of a "sopra porta," in any of the most inferior churches of the Trastevere.†

His good friends Mercuri and Simonelli were themselves strangers in Rome, and natives of a country equally feared and hated by the Roman Court. They could only have assisted him in a manner from which, to judge by the sentiments on pecuniary matters expressed in his own letters, his pride must have revolted. How little these two amiable ecclesiastics had been able to push him on in his profession, is evinced by their having pressed him to leave Rome, and accompany them on a visit they were about to make with their "eminentissimo padrone" to Viterbo. The Cardinal Brancaccia had been recently made Bishop of that diocese, and, in obedience to ecclesiastical etiquette, was obliged to visit his see, and perform service in its venerable cathedral. Salvator accepted this invitation of his friends, because (says Passeri) "non aveva ricapito in Roma," he had no other asylum in Rome than the Cardinal's now deserted palace.

It was this terrible consciousness of not having "where

* Sir J. Reynolds.

† *Sopra porta*, the space over a door.—Even Salvator's country was against him; for Naples, like Ireland, imprinted a stigma on all she sent forth. "S'il y a en Italie une nation qui soit portée à une réforme, ce sont les Neapolitains; témoin, les prisons de l'Inquisition, qui sont remplies de personnes de leur nation. Car, on peut dire hardiment que de dix qui sont accusés à ce tribunal, il y en a neuf qui sont de Naples ou du Royaume."—*Voyage Historique d'Italie*, 1719.

to lay his head," save as the charity of friendship allotted him an eleemosynary shelter, which probably inspired those lines which he has woven into one of his bitterest satires :

" Virtude oggi nemmeno ha tanta paglia
Per gettarsi a giacere, e a borsa sciolta
Spende l' oro dei re, turba che raglia."*

The luxury and magnificence of the " Porporati " of Rome were at this period carried to an excess which royalty could not surpass. The journey of a Cardinal to his diocese, or when on a diplomatic mission, resembled the royal progress of a travelling sovereign, rather than the journey of a subject. In Italy they were generally accompanied by a train of an hundred domestics, including in this denomination their chaplains, and the ecclesiastics comprised in their household. Their carriages were all glass and gold, with silver springs and velvet linings; and their sumpter-mules were laden with rich furniture and with bedsteads,† which were sometimes composed of solid silver set with precious stones, and provided with mattresses of eider-down; while a troop of cavalry brought up their rear,—no unnecessary accompaniment to the well-laden caravan.

The unfortunate painter, in feeling the humility of his position with all the bitterness and acrimony of proud but neglected genius, may yet have considered this splendid and graphic cortège, as it wound up the romantic heights of Viterbo, with a painter's eye. The clerical habits of the monkish Camerieri, the broad green hats of the Capellini, which distinguished them from the inferior members of the household, the gallant bearing of the gaily-dressed footmen, the sumpter-mules, with their gaudy trappings and merry bells, and the armed guard which closed the procession, tinged with the lights of a brilliant sunset on the entrée of one of the most picturesque cities of Italy, must have presented images so consonant to Salvator's views and feelings, as to have cheered his spirits and stolen him from the contemplation of his own hapless situation. Yet, even then, one prophetic thought may have crossed his mind, that the high and mighty prince, to whom he was too insignificant

* " While prodigality showers wealth upon public singers, genius can scarcely procure a sheaf of straw to rest upon."—*La Musica*.

† " Which gratification the Italians much glory in, as did our grandfathers in England, in their inlaid wooden ones."—*Evelyn's Memoirs*.

even to be known, might be rescued from oblivion, and reach posterity through the accident which connected the name of Brancaccia with that of Salvator Rosa.

It is usual with the members of the Conclave, when visiting their distant dioceses, to throw off much of the state and ceremony they are compelled to assume at Rome; and (obliged by the narrowness of the circle) to live on a more intimate and familiar footing with the officers of their household, in order to avoid that ennui which is the tax of all unoccupied grandeur. It was possibly from this circumstance that the zealous Maestro di Casa was enabled to present to his eminence the painter who had so long occupied a deserted attic in his palace. The Cardinal was much pleased (*molto contento*) with the new member of his establishment, and sufficiently satisfied with what he saw of his drawings to give him the portico and the "Loggia" of the episcopal palace to paint in fresco. The subject was left to Salvator's own selection; and, obliged to consult the genius of the place, which by its publicity was ill-adapted either to sacred or profane history, Salvator chose a subject purely poetical, the "*scherzo de' mostri marini*," the "idle disport" of marine deities floating on sunny seas, or mounted on the backs of sportive dolphins. This piece, though not deemed among the most perfect productions of its author, had yet sufficient merit in the eyes of his new patron to induce him to bespeak the grand altar-piece for the Chiesa della Morte of Viterbo at the hands of Salvator.* This was the first and last public work ever assigned to him in the Roman States by a member of the Government. The Cardinal again left him the choice of his subject, and he chose the incredulity of St. Thomas,—a bold and perilous theme! Salvator seized that moment in the life of the sceptical saint, in which, having said, "except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hands into his wounds, I will not believe," he finds himself called upon by his divine Master to bring his doubts to the proof. The figures were, in the technical phrase, "*di grandezza naturale*," large as life.

This historical picture, though only the second he had ever executed, and the first on a great scale, was declared

* At this period, and not before, Pascoli supposes that Rosa "*s' accomodò al servizio del Cardinal Brancaccia suo paesano*," accepted service under his countryman the Cardinal.

by the critical umpires of a succeeding age, to be painted "con qualche gusto," with *some* taste. This faint praise was, however, confined to the mechanical execution. The intellect which suggested the choice of subject was not appreciated by the canting virtuosi,* who overlook in Salvator those first requisites of an historical painter,—great mental powers, and a facility of combination which always rendered him the painter of the philosophy of human nature.

While mounted on his platform before the high altar of the church "della Morte," he attracted the attention of one of those loungers to whose idle intrusions all the churches of Italy are liable. His splenetic pleasantry, his epigrammatic turns, seem to have had a peculiar charm for this unknown acquaintance, whose habit bespoke him of some rank in the Church, and who soon became a fixture at the "altare maggiore."

The charm of Salvator's conversation, which had first attracted the stranger, was succeeded by another of still greater effect. One of the most delightful *talkers* of his day (on the testimony of all his contemporaries) was also one of the *best listeners*; and the daily visitor of the Chiesa della Morte found, perhaps, the only willing auditor in Viterbo for his eternal recitations of his own verses. This visitant was the Della Cruscan Abbate, Antonio Abbati, a genuine *seicentista*, and one of the fashionable poets of the day, whose sonnets without sentiment, and epigrams without point, procured him a contemporary reputation in the blue-stocking coteries of that age of literary feebleness and fatuity. Such names as the Abbate's just serve in the present day to fill up the lists of the painstaking Tiraboschis and Crescimbenis, which preserve with faithful accuracy all the authors

"Of all such reading as was never read."

It has been remarked by many as singular, that Salvator never once attempted to repay the Abbate Antonio in kind. After the lapse of years, when Abbati returned from Germany, where he had long resided, and found Salvator's fame

* The disgust expressed by Sterne at professional criticism must be participated by every person of strong feeling and good sense who visits Italy. At every step one is inclined to repeat, "*Of all the cants,*" &c.

as a poet far beyond his own, "si stupeva," says Passeri, he was astonished. But he was much more surprised at the modesty and forbearance of the young painter, than capable of appreciating the merits of his singular and highly poetical satires.*

The frescoes of the episcopal palace, (the only frescoes which Rosa ever executed,) the grand altar-piece of the Chiesa della Morte, and some exquisite quadretti, which from time to time he sent from Viterbo to the Roman market, were now gradually, though slowly, opening the way to that brilliant reputation, which Salvator is described as seeking with fretful impatience, and with a scarcely-repressed indignation; when his savage independence appears to have taken alarm at the obscure and humiliating position he was gradually assuming in the household of the Cardinal Brancaccia. Between the frank and friendly attentions of his college companion and equal, Mercuri, and the dependence of the "creato" of a great personage, there was a difference clearly appreciable by one whose spirit was as free as the elements he delighted to paint, and wild as the regions he loved to haunt. In leaving the protection of the Cardinal, Salvator may have been influenced by circumstances which never reached the knowledge even of his most active biographers. Patronage, which is made for mediocrity, is never an atmosphere for the free breathings of genius. He who through life had said that "liberty was beyond price, and that the honours and wealth the world could give would not purchase him,"† may have felt the weight of the first chain he ever wore, however lightly it may have lain. It is easy to charge the protected with ingratitude; but who, save the victim, *can* know the daily, hourly, little grievances inflicted by the caprice of wealthy pride upon the object of its degrading protection? which, if "*patient* merit of the unworthy take," the *impatient* pride of the highest order of sensibility spurns at every risk: a word, a look, even a gesture, from the haughty *porporato*, may have been sufficient to have stirred up the "bile," roused the "spirit," kindled the

* Pascoli, however, says, that the Abbate's admiration of the literary talents of his young friend induced him to correspond with him for some time after he left Viterbo, and on all occasions to seek him out.

† Pascoli.

“fire” of one who has described himself as wholly made up of such unquiet elements.

But, however this may have been, Salvator Rosa, after a year's residence in the Episcopal palace of Viterbo, departed, not for Rome, but, to the astonishment of all, for Naples. For this singular return to a country where he had only to expect the persecution of enemies and the neglect of friends, his biographers assign a reason, connected equally with his affections and his interests,—namely, that he was preyed upon by the *maladie du pays*, and influenced by a hope that his absence, at Rome, might have raised his pictures in the estimation of a capricious public, easily satiated with works whose author is always within the reach of a command.*

Whether the distinction conferred upon him by the protection of the Cardinal Brancaccia, or the increase of his reputation at Rome from the circulation of his small pictures, were influential in procuring him a better reception at Naples than his genius had yet obtained for him, does not appear; but that he sustained a superior post in his native country during this visit, to any he had ever before arrived at, is attested by most of his biographers.†

The hostility of the painter faction was now entirely directed against its great victim Domenichino, who, urged by his necessities, had once more returned to Naples; and Ancillo Falcone, who alone took no part in the disgraceful illiberality of his brother artists, renewed his friendship with Salvator Rosa, and now perhaps first discovered that identity of feeling and opinion upon subjects of deeper interest than the arts, which so intimately united them in the fearful events of a future day. For the present, however, the ambition of Salvator was all directed to Rome, to the obtaining, by force of superior genius alone, the suffrages of her refined public, and of those fastidious virtuosi who assembled from all parts of Europe in congress within her walls. From time to time he continued to send his pictures to his friends Mercuri and Simonelli, whose zeal

* Pascoli simply says, “Gli cadde in animo di rivedere la patria, e, preso da lui congedo, si messe in camino.”

† Pascoli alone says, that he was deeply disappointed by his reception in Naples; and that his mortified feelings at the insensibility of his countrymen induced him, for the *third time*, to leave that city.

in his cause increased with the gradual developement of his genius, and who had long desired for their countryman a distinction, which intrigue and influence, rather than merit, were calculated to obtain.*

A company, or, in the Italian phrase, a *congregation* of virtuosi had instituted two public exhibitions of pictures at Rome, upon the feasts of Saint Joseph and of Saint John (San Giovanni Decollato). The exhibition, which had the *virtù* of Europe for its spectators, was held at the Pantheon. It had become an arena, in which the rival geniuses of Rome had to contend, not only with each other, but with the great masters who had preceded them, and whose *chefs-d'œuvre* the Roman nobility, in all the pride of property, were wont to transfer on these occasions from the galleries to the Pantheon.†

Where so many competitors presented themselves, patronage and influence naturally interfered; and every "Mecenate" (Mæcenas) had one or more dependents to recommend to the congregation, which, like other congregations, was swayed in its elections by its own interests, and the power and rank of protecting patrons. Salvator Rosa, who had no "Mecenate," and was no man's "dependente," made no effort to enter the already over-crowded lists. A picture, however, which he sent from Naples for sale, to his friend Nicola Simonelli, made its own claim on the suffrages of the congregation, to whom the zealous Simonelli presented it; and the "Prometheus"‡ of Salvator took its place by the side of the *capi d'opera* of Titian and Leonardo da Vinci, effacing all the contemporary productions which surrounded it.§ This picture, which gave "una

* It is probable that, during this second visit to Naples, he painted his Saint Nicola de Bari in the church of the Chartreux of San Martino, where he had formerly exercised his talents with his burned sticks.

† Salvator complains of this in his letter to Riccardi thirty years afterwards, when he had reached the summit of his ambition.

‡ Besides prose criticisms and commendations of "The Prometheus," a poetical eloge was published with the signature of "The Demosthenes of Painting," and supposed to be written by Simonelli. Passeri calls this picture "un Tizio lacerato dall' Avoltojo," Tityus torn by the Vulture. The fate of the giant and of Prometheus is so similar, that the picture may answer for either; but the beautiful figure of the sufferer has nothing gigantic in its proportions: it is all human symmetry and human suffering.

§ The following description of this noble picture by Monge, is equally characteristic of the work and its author:—

"Si l'on demandait ce que les artistes entendent par *la fougue*, il serait

fama strepitosa al nome del S. Rosa," a decided reputation to the name of Salvator, cancelled for ever the diminutive of Salvatoriello, modestly affixed to it. All Rome was occupied with praising its beauties or decrying its faults. Envy and admiration were perpetually employed in analyzing its pretensions to the public suffrages. But the public, with its sure instinct, decided in favour of the laborious Salvatoriello of the *rivenditori* of the Piazza Navona; and the fame of the future historical painter was laid upon the firm basis of the public opinion.

The echo of the applauses which rose under the dome of the Pantheon, reached Salvator in his remote work-room in Naples; and the entreaties of his friends Mercuri and Simonelli for his return were so warm, their accounts of his success so brilliant, that (says Passeri) Rosa "*prese animo di così grata e gradita relazione*," took courage from such

plus simple de présenter les ouvrages de S. Rosa, que de chercher une définition. Celle-ci ne saurait concevoir qu'imparfaitement la fièvre d'imagination désignée par le mot *fougue*; tandis que tout la rétrace chez le peintre Napolitain. . . . Ici Prométhée enchaîné sur les sommets du Caucase, voit un aigle déchirer son foie toujours renaissant. Ses membres contractés annoncent les douleurs atroces qu'il endure. On croit entendre les échos de ces âpres rochers redire ses mugissemens. Une figure seule, isolée, souffrante, captive toute notre attention. Ce n'est donc pas les graces, le mouvement, le grand nombre de figures, qui produisent l'intérêt dans les arts: l'expression est tout. Le reste n'est souvent qu'un prestige mal-adroit qui décèle l'empressement et la froideur de l'imagination."

Notwithstanding the agony impressed in the features of Prometheus, nothing can be more beautiful or sublime than "the patient energy" of the countenance. The mouth is that of the Apollo Belvidere, something distorted by pain. The wound made by the vulture is small, but, as Passeri observes, sufficiently large to show the injured intestine. The anatomy of this figure is worthy of Michael Angelo; and its moral expression equally worthy of him, whose *own Prometheus* is drawn under the same inspiration as directed the pencil of Salvator.

"A silent suffering, and intense—
The rock, the vulture, and the chain!
All that the proud can feel of pain.
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness;
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a list'ner, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless—"

The Prometheus of Lord Byron.

This picture afterwards became one of the chief ornaments of the Corsini palace, where it now is.

pleasing news, and, once more bidding adieu to Naples, arrived in Rome ere the sensation awakened by his Prometheus had subsided. Neither the merit, however, of the picture, the genius of the artist, nor the exertions of the few and uninfluential friends his talents had raised up for him, could procure his entrance into the accademia of St. Luke—then an indispensable distinction even for the first artists, but which even the dullest mediocrity, when backed by influence, never failed to obtain.

Salvator was struck to the soul by the injustice of his rejection; but, like the statues of Brutus and Cassius in the funeral procession of Junia, he was, perhaps, only the more conspicuous for this exclusion. His bettered fortunes, however, though but comparatively good, now enabled him to indulge in the master-passion of his existence,—independence. He declined the eleemosynary home, which he still could command in the uninhabited vastness of the Brancaccia palacè, and for the first time became the master of a shed which he could call his own. He hired a house in the Via Babbuina, close to the fountain from which it takes its name, and near to the Strada Margutta. His first household acquisition was singular for an Italian and one so young,—he collected books, and with very small means acquired a tolerable library. “With his books,” says Pascoli, “and his pencil, he now passed his time; while his poetry, and the spell of his fascinating conversation, drew around him some of the young literati and artists, whose taste for music and poetry, and whose habits of life, assimilated to his own.”*

With this little band he formed the “crocchio ristretto,” the select circle, which the Italians love so much, and in which the subjects of despotic governments find their sole indemnification for the absence of those public assemblies only tolerated in free countries. The centre of his own circle, Salvator’s superior intellect soon raised him above the equality of companionship. From an associate he became a chief; and men who were afterwards notable in arts, science, and literature, were then distinguished by the appellation of “his followers.”

* “Tirò per mezzo di sue rime, e della sua suave e dolce conversazione, alcuni giovani coetanei a un intima amicizia, e se rende talmente padrone degli animi loro, che ne faceva ciò che voleva.”—*Pascoli*.

But the admiration which he awakened in the enlightened few who surrounded him, rendered him only the more restless and impatient under the slowness of his progress to that high position in his profession, which, even then, he deemed himself worthy to take beside the first masters of his age. His exquisite *PROMETHEUS* had brought more applause than profit. He had still to contend with the empirics of the Academy, who saw no merit in the man that belonged to no school, whom no Cardinal recommended as his "creato," and to whom no prince assigned the symbolic representation of his own virtues on the ceilings of his palace.

In the midst of his private intellectual enjoyments and public professional mortifications, arrived the Carnival of the year 1639; and Salvator, for once flinging aside his palette, and locking up his studio, suddenly resolved to open for himself a new career of fashionable notoriety, and to start for the goal by a path, the least obviously calculated to lead to success.* Whether he thus acted in utter recklessness of a world he contemned, or from his painfully earned experience of its inconsequence and frivolity, the result of his new speculation was favourable beyond what the doctrine of probabilities could have anticipated.

Much of the splendour and ingenuity which distinguished the Carnival festivities of the Middle Ages was still in fashion in Italy. Poets, philosophers, and statesmen—artists, musicians, and mechanists—contributed to the celebration of the Christian Saturnalia. The ancient "*Canti Carnascialeschi*" of Francesco Grazini, so much in vogue in the days of Lorenzo de' Medici, had been succeeded by the "*Carnavaleschi*" of one whose name had reached posterity by works of a far different character: and the Carnival poems of Machiavel† were still recited in the streets of Florence by groups of fantastic maskers, habited as ghosts, bandits, monks, nymphs, and satyrs; while his "*Prince*" was the study of Europe, and its hidden purport the enigma which puzzled alike the tyrant and the slave to solve.

* "*Rendendosi impaziente per non vedere quello che più desiderava di grido, e di acclamazione, gli venne in pensiero per far maggiore apertura alla cognizione della sua persona, di introdursi,*" &c.—*Passeri*.

† Machiavel, affecting the Greek model, introduced into these compositions a chorus, and he formed it of bands of devils, the then necessary accompaniment to all human agency.

In Rome the Carnival, more joyous, and even more fantastical than in Florence, was of a ruder character, and was occasionally rendered, through the influence of the Papal Government, the medium of the most fearful bigotry.* But the popular entertainment on these occasions was called "*Le Zingaresche*," and consisted of comic dialogues, in which a gipsy, or a group of gipsies, engaged in a "fierce encounter of the wits," and told fortunes, revealed love-secrets, and exercised the craft of legerdemain with what skill they might. These dialogues gradually assumed a dramatic form, and were rather sung than spoken, to such accompaniment on the guitar as the ambulatory troop could procure.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, an elegant innovation in the Carnival festivities of Rome was introduced by Quagliate, the composer, which is notable as the first secular musical drama, or opera, ever exhibited in that city, and as giving an idea of the higher festivities of the Carnival at the particular period when Salvator Rosa became one of its most brilliant ornaments.

"My master Quagliate," says the quaint and amusing traveller Della Valle, "introduced a new species of music into the churches of Rome, not only in compositions for a single voice, but for two, three, four, and often more voices in choruses, ending with a numerous crowd of many choruses singing together, specimens of which may be seen in many of his *motets* that have been since printed; and the music of my car, or *moveable*, during the Carnival, composed by the same Quagliate in my own room, chiefly in the manner he found most agreeable to me, and performed in masks through the streets of Rome during the Carnival of 1606, was the first dramatic action or representation in music that had ever been heard in that city. Though no more than five voices or five instruments were employed, (the exact number which an ambulant car could contain,) yet these afforded great variety; as, besides the dialogue of

* The particular *Rioni*, or quarters of Rome, were noted for giving, during the Carnival, mock exhibitions of the trials and executions of Jews. The stages on which these sanguinary scenes were enacted were drawn by oxen. The actors appeared to hang, strangle, or torture the unfortunate victims of Christian hatred after the manner of the Inquisition, for the edification of the faithful. These representations were called "*Le Giudiate*."

single voices, sometimes two or three, and at last all five sang together, which had an admirable effect. He pleased the public so much, that there were some even who continued to follow our car to ten or twelve different places where it stopped, and who never quitted it as long as we remained, which was from four o'clock in the evening until midnight."

Towards the close of the Carnival of 1639, when the spirits of the revellers (as is always the case in Rome) were making a brilliant rally for the representations of the last week, a car, or stage, highly ornamented, drawn by oxen,* and occupied by a masked troop, attracted universal attention by its novelty and singular representations. The principal personage announced himself as a certain Signor Formica, a Neapolitan actor,† who, in the character of Coviello,‡ as a charlatan, displayed so much genuine wit, such bitter satire, and exquisite humour, rendered doubly effective by a Neapolitan accent, and "i motivi dei lazzi nazionali," or national gesticulations, that other representations were abandoned; and gipsies told fortunes, and Jews hung, in vain. The whole population of Rome gradually assembled round the novel, the inimitable Formica.

* Evelyn, who visited Rome in 1645, speaking of the Carnival, observes of these Thespian carts: "One thing is remarkable—their acting comedies on a stage placed in a cart, or *plaustrum*, where the scene, or tiring place, is made of bushes in a rural manner, which they drive from street to street with a yoke or two of oxen, after the ancient guise."

† It was at this time the fashion, both in France and Italy, for all actors to appear before the public with a "*nom de guerre*," and to conceal their own. Jean Baptiste Poquelin has immortalized that of Molière by assuming it in one of his earliest dramatic campaigns. "*Il ne fit, (says Voltaire,) en changeant de nom, que suivre l'exemple des Comédiens d'Italie, et de ceux de l'hôtel de Bourgogne. L'un, dont le nom de famille étoit Le Grand, s'appelloit Belville dans la tragédie, et Turlupin dans la farce. Arlequin et Scaramouche n'étoient que les noms de théâtre.*"

‡ Coviello, one of the "seven masks" of Italy, or national dramatic characters, is the theatrical representative of the Calabrians. The wit of Coviello, therefore, is supposed to be sharp as the air of his native Abruzzi. Adroit and vain-glorious, a Proteus in character, language, and manner, he still preserves his native accent and habit; and his black velvet jacket and pantaloons, studded with silver buttons and rich embroidery, were well calculated to set off the handsome person of the wearer, if he happened to possess one, and to give to his figure a certain air of elegance, strongly contrasted with his conventional mask, with its crimson cheeks, black nose and forehead. Salvator's reasons for choosing this character (always popular in Rome) are obvious.

The people relished his flashes of splenetic humour, aimed at the great; the higher orders were delighted with an improvvisatore, who, in the intervals of his dialogues, sung to the lute, of which he was a perfect master, the Neapolitan ballads, then so much in vogue. The attempts made by his fellow-revellers to obtain some share of the plaudits he so abundantly received, whether he spoke or sung, asked or answered questions, were all abortive; while he (says Baldinucci) "*come capo di tutti, e pur spiritoso, e ben parlante, con bei ghiribizzi e lazzi spiritosi teneva a se mezza Roma,*" "at the head of everything by his wit, eloquence, and brilliant humour, drew half Rome to himself."* The contrast between his beautiful musical and poetical compositions, and those Neapolitan gesticulations in which he indulged, when, laying aside his lute, he presented his vials and salves to the delighted audience, exhibited a versatility of genius, which it was difficult to attribute to any individual then known in Rome. Guesses and suppositions were still vainly circulating among all classes, when, on the close of the Carnival, Formica, ere he drove his triumphal car from the Piazza Navona, which, with one of the streets in the Trastevere, had been the principal scene of his triumph, ordered his troop to raise their masks, and removing his own, discovered that Coviello was the sublime author of the Prometheus, and his little troop the "Partigiani" of Salvator Rosa. All Rome was from this moment (to use a phrase which all his biographers have adopted) "filled with his fame." That notoriety which his high genius had failed to procure for him, was obtained at once by those lighter talents, which he had nearly suffered to fall into neglect, while more elevated views had filled his mind.

Rome then abounded in private societies, or meetings,† which, dignified with the title of "*Accademie*," occupied themselves with literature and the arts; and "*Conversazioni*" of a less pedantic character, but still smacking of the Precieuses Ridicules of the Hotel Rambouillet of Paris,

* He collected about him, says Passeri, the whole of the Roman population, to whom he gave the most humorous recipes. It is supposed that he borrowed the technicalities of these recipes from Giovanni Breccio, a celebrated Roman physician of that day.

† Evelyn has preserved on record a most graphic description of these "*conversazioni*" and "*accademie*."

were held by ladies of rank, and were more especially devoted to music, poetry, and gallantry. To such societies, whether held in the seventeenth or the nineteenth century,—in London, in Paris, or in Rome,—the talents which apply themselves to the senses rather than the intellect, and which, while they amuse all, inflict not the penalty of thinking or feeling upon any, are sure to command success. No *Lion* that was ever turned out for the amusement of the “*peu amusables*” of the supreme English circles, ever excited a stronger sensation, or was in more general request, than the *Formica* of the Carnival. To use a French phrase applied to the objects of the present day’s idolatry, “*on se l’arracha* ;” and the account which Pascoli gives of this sudden vogue might answer for a description of the “*grand succès*” of any idol of fashionable notoriety in the saloons of the Rue Saint Honoré, or the drawing-rooms of the “west end of the town.”

“*Rosa*,” says his biographer, “who was eminently musical, and accompanied himself on the lute with wondrous skill, now went from one *conversazione* to another, singing and reciting, ‘*al improvviso*,’ thus extending his fame by giving himself up to society. He saw all Rome desirous to possess him; and it was now easy for him to make his singular genius known to all, not only as a painter, but a poet.” It appears, in fact, from other testimony, that the lute and *canzonetti* of the delightful Neapolitan musician,* “*gli facessero strada nell’uscir fuori come Pittore*”—“paved the way for the fame of the painter.”†

The season, however, of idleness and relaxation, the Roman summer, overtook him in the very delirium of the first enjoyment of that homefelt and tangible fame, which came at once to his senses and apprehension; and reached

* *Salvator Rosa*, whose satire on the style and passion for music then prevalent at Rome, made him so many enemies among the professional men of the day, found the Neapolitan *canzonette* still a novelty, though it had been introduced there so long back as 1611, by Della Valle. All the guitars in Rome were thrumming the *canzonettes* of *Baptista Bellis*, which were but awkward imitations of that original excellence which *Salvator* had acquired at the fountain-head. Through all his struggles, and in the midst of all his labours, says *Baldinucci*, “*Si diletto in oltre modo della musica, e suonò il luto*”—“he delighted beyond everything in music, and played upon the lute.”

† *Pascoli*.

him not in the faint breathings of distant report, but in the glances of bright eyes and the bravos of beautiful lips, which a young and handsome improvvisatore was well calculated to extort. Physically incapacitated for exercising his professional art during the enervating heats of this season,* and, perhaps, unable to call in those stray spirits and wandering thoughts, whose pleasant but profitless intoxications forbid the concentration necessary to great works, Salvator frankly gave himself up to the delicious and novel sensations of pleasing and being pleased. If the genial emotions of pleasure which circulated through his veins and warmed his imagination suffered any alloy, it was because his position in society enabled him to take a clearer view of its worthlessness than he had yet had an opportunity of obtaining. If its vices, in his more sober days, struck on his moral sense, and called forth the splenetic humour discernible in his Satires, he was now most alive to its ridicules, its pretensions, and, above all, to the bad taste so characteristic of the literary pretenders of that "unhappy century," since branded with the dishonourable appellation of "*il cattivo secolo della lingua.*"†

Too petulant to enter into any compromise with his feelings upon any subject, the admirer of Dante and Boccaccio expressed his opinions of the seicentisti poets with more wit than discretion. The ephemeral compositions of the time, though crowned by academies, tempted him to give a practical expression to his opinion, as novel as it was dangerous and imprudent.

Salvator was a passionate admirer of the old national drama of Italy, from which Shakspeare and Molière have alike largely drawn. Its classic original,‡ and fine adaptation to the taste and humour of the Italians, gave it a particular charm to one who was, in an eminent degree, a scholar and a patriot. He observed, therefore, with impatience and indignation the old "*Commedia a soggetto,*" with its rich and racy humour, hunted down by the miserable "*rimatori*" of the times, as being too national, too

* See his letters.

† The captive age of literature.—*Baretti.*

‡ Derived from the Atellane farce. The actors in these plebeian, but national dramas, unlike the *histriones* or common players, kept their tribe, and served in the army. The function therefore was not deemed derogatory to a free man.

Italian for the taste of the influential house of Austria; while insipid pastorals, and tame and timid imitations of the cold Greek tragedy, inundated the country,—alike setting aside the broad farce of the “sette maschere,” the “Suppositi” of Ariosto, and the “Mandragora” of Machiavel. The reigning drama was a compound of cold conceit and crude pedantry. The real purpose of the stage, the correction of man by man, and the representation of the possible relations of society under moral and amusing fictions, was wholly laid aside; and the abortive attempts of the fashionable writers (of whom Tiraboschi has given a list of several hundred) were as foreign from life and nature as from the peculiar humour of the Italian people. Their sentiment was exaggerated, and their comedy a dull buffoonery, which preserved the coarseness, without any of the raciness, of the old Italian play. Nor is this a matter for surprise; for, though wit may sometimes be found to characterise the literature which thrives under despotic governments, humour is almost exclusively the result of free institutions.*

The old “*Commedie a soggetto*,” although they had their prescribed outlines, or “*Pistoletti*,” frequently written by men of talent, still left so much to the genius of the actor, that they may be considered as performed *impromptu*. The outline studied behind the scenes, the actor came forward, and, entering into the full conception of the part, gave vent to his originality, and filled up the canvas with such curious details, such hits at national, local, and temporary peculiarities, and such flashes of humour and of satire, as his native powers of observation, of mimicry, or of wit enabled him to command.

The characters, however, of this drama were so definitively prescribed by ancient authority, and were so indicative of the provincial peculiarities of the Italian States, (always divided, and always prone to ridicule each other's follies and deficiencies,) that they had become as conven-

* Molière's wit is much more striking than his humour. Those of his scenes which abound in the latter quality are mostly borrowed from the Italian stage; and if in his works there be any details of humour purely national, they must be considered as the remains of that rude and turbulent freedom of which the Fronde was the last explosion—a freedom which had utterly expired under the iron despotism of Louis XIV.

tional as the masks by which they were distinguished; and, impressing a definite tone and colour on each part in the piece, they confined the caprice of the actor within well-determined boundaries.

Of these conventional characters, Pantaloon, or "Pantalone dei Bisognosi," represented the Venetians. Always dressed in a flowing black robe, a round cap, and an elderly long-bearded mask, he images the genuine ancient merchant of Venice: in society, a good easy man; in trade, a keen and shrewd chapman; he talks morality like a Seneca, and affects gallantry like a Preux. He is the confidant and counsellor of princes, and though a professional peace-maker, is always ready to draw the knife suspended at his side, and mingle in the fight. His ridicule, the ridicule of his nation, is a tendency to prose; and his display of slipshod erudition derives additional effect from the lisping Venetian dialect in which it finds utterance.

The doctor, "Il dottore Balanzoni," is a Bolognese, an epitome of dogmatism, pedantry, and egotism; and the heaviness of his discourse curiously contrasts with an inarticulate rapidity in his utterance. A philosopher, an astronomer, a grammarian, a rhetorician, a cabalist, an anatomist, a physician, and a diplomatist, he knows everything, decides on everything, and on all subjects is the hero of his own tale. His short black open gown, enormous hat with horizontal flaps, his bloated ruby cheek and purple nose, add to the ridicule of a character, which may be taken as an exaggeration of the literary coxcombs of the university of the learned Bologna.

Tartaglia is a Neapolitan mask. With still more loquacious tendencies, his volubility is restrained by an organic defect. He is obliged to give minutes to the utterance of syllables; and the collision of his petulance and perseverance with this difficulty produces the most ludicrous grimaces of impatience and rage. He is a professed rhodomontader; and affecting the bravo, his efforts to bolt out some fierce or violent threat, produce effects not to be conceived by those who are ignorant of the violence of Neapolitan gesticulation. His showy habit of green and gold, and his short cloak, are the true old Neapolitan costume.

The graceful, agile, and adroit Arlechino, from whom, at an immense distance, has descended the hero of the Eng-

lish pantomime, is a native of Bergamo, and distinguished by the peculiarities of his province. The faithless lover of all the soubrettes (columbines), the buffoon of the great, the accommodating agent of the young and the gallant, the torment of old fathers and husbands, he robs misers, exhorts pedants, beats his master, and is beaten in his turn, and produces the most ludicrous *quid pro quo's* by misapplied erudition, witty absurdities, and naïve questions. He is the especial agent or victim of faerie, and is alternately protected and persecuted by genii and conjurors, according to the exigencies of the story. He is characterized by an half-black mask, close-fitting jacket of many colours, white cap and slippers, and elastic wooden sword.

The doubles of Arlechino are Trufaldino and Triagnino, who differ in nothing from their "great original" but in dress, being habited in showy liveries.

Brighella is the reverse of Arlechino; trustworthy, cautious, and vigilant. He alternately wearies his master with wise saws, and proverbial similes, and amuses him by misapplied and far-fetched quotations. His dress and mask are equally conventional, and, before he speaks, his loose white jacket, and pantaloons edged with blue, intimate the character to the expecting audience.

Coviello is a Calabrian; shrewd, satirical, all observing; with every talent, and every disposition to display it. His habit and general qualifications have already been noted.

The reverse in everything to this brilliant personage, is the stupid, blundering, and bulky Pagliaccio (the model of the clown of an English pantomime, and of the *Pierrot* of the French stage). His supposed ponderous figure is buried in a large, gathered, and voluminous linen dress (resembling the old Irish shirt of many ells), appropriately set off with enormous buttons. His hat is white, flexible, and capable of receiving every form. His face, independent of a mask, is rubbed with white powder, which gives him the appearance of a miller's boy; and he puffs it out by a trick of swelling his cheeks with his breath. Always advising bold measures, he is the veriest coward in nature; and affecting agility, he is always stumbling; and he drags with him in his falls his feeble old master, whom he effects to support.

Pulchinello is the true Neapolitan mask, and the idol of

the people, both in Naples and throughout the Pope's dominions. This exquisite comic character may be considered as a broad caricature of the common people of Naples, as Nature and a series of oppressive governments have left it. Quick, witty, and insolent, vain, boasting, and cowardly, Pulchinello is hurried by his volcanic and inconsiderate temperament into every species of misfortune. In his broad Neapolitan patois, he gives utterance to the pleasantest sallies, and the most biting satire, with a naïveté that seems to mingle great simplicity with great shrewdness. Whatever is most ludicrous in the extreme of Neapolitan manners, is assigned to Pulchinello. He howls like the Lazzaroni, boasts like a Spanish Don, flies to covert on the least appearance of danger, and, when all is over, is the first to join in the cry of victory. His wit, roguery, and cowardice, render him the Italian Falstaff; and his affectation of gallantry, with a person grotesquely ridiculous, recalls occasionally the adventures of the delightful knight in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. His frequent allusion to *maccaroni*, the favourite diet of the Neapolitans, has so confounded his identity with this national dish, that they have become inseparable in the imagination of the other Italians. It is scarcely necessary to add, after this description, that Pulchinello differs entirely from the punch of the French and English puppet-show, with whom he is confounded even by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, April 1823. He has nothing of the facetious itinerant of our streets and booths, but his hooked nose. He wears a black mask and a linen dress, fuller even than that of *Pagliaccio*.

The progress of time and of events has added several subordinate characters to these originals of the "*Commedia del arte*," or "*a soggetto*," who, with the lovers, fathers, guardians, &c., fill up the piece.

The great scope left to the invention of the actor, admitted the introduction of many subjects of local and temporary interest; and in filling up the canvas of the national character of Naples, Lombardy, and Venice, sarcasms at particular institutions, or at obnoxious individuals, rendered these masked characters a sort of permitted substitute for the liberty of the press.

Such were the long-venerated national dramas, the "*Com-*

medie a soggetto.” The comedies of the early part of the seventeenth century, on the contrary, feebly conceived and loosely constructed, generally originated in, or were acted by, private literary societies, called “Accademie,” distinguished by those fantastic and ludicrous names by which they are now consecrated to eternal ridicule. The members of these societies, who denied that Ariosto was a poet, (prototypes of those of the present day who refuse Pope the same title,) and who assisted in the persecution of Tasso, not only composed comedies *ad infinitum*, but acted or recited them,* until what at first had been a matter of taste or of literary ambition, became gradually a source of profit.

This passion for profitable theatricals became a sort of rage: it reached the palaces of princes, the refectories of monks;† and finally it infected the holy atmosphere of the Vatican itself. The first in Rome to mount the high-heeled cothurnus of sentimental or heroic comedy, had been that “actor of all work,” the Cavalier Bernini! With the permission of his brother poetaster, Urban VIII., and the laborious assistance of his slavish pupils, he planned and constructed a theatre in the spacious hall of the “Fonderia” of the Vatican, which took the lead of every private theatre in Rome; and he assisted to confirm that bad taste in the drama of the age, by rendering it the fashion.‡

The talent which planned and finished the baldichino of St. Peter’s, now devoted itself with equal zeal to painting scenery, inventing machinery, selecting music, and sketching the outline of a drama, which Ottaviano Castelli, one of his numerous followers, and a genuine seicentisto, filled up with dialogues, after the manner of Bernini’s friend and model, the Cavaliere Marini.

* “Il n’y eut si petite ville où il ne se formât une académie dont l’unique affaire étoit de donner des spectacles payés.”—*Sismondi*.

† “We were entertained at night with an English play at the Jesuits, where we had dined: and the next at Prince Galicano’s, who himself composed the music to a magnificent opera, where were present Cardinal Pamfilio, the Pope’s nephew, the governor of Rome, the Cardinal ambassador, ladies, and a number of nobility and strangers.”—*Evelyn*.

‡ “Bernini,” says Evelyn, “a Florentine sculptor, architect, painter, and poet, a little before my coming to the city, gave a public opera, (for so they call shows of that kind,) wherein he painted the scenes, cut the statues, invented the engines, composed the music, writ the comedy, and built the theatre.”

The dramas of the Vatican had all the faults of the dramatic compositions of that age of degraded literature; and Bernini, who seems to have been the very type of Bays, introduced some practical conceits, which, in spite even of the bad taste of the times, could only have been tolerated under the sanction of *his* influence and fashion, aided by the combined talents of all his disciples, and an audience composed of princes and cardinals.

Bernini had scarcely closed his theatre for the season, and was still catching the echoes of plaudits which shook the pontifical edifice to its centre, when the opening of another private theatre was announced, at the Vigna de' Mignanelli, a pretty but deserted villa near the Porta del Popolo. The first day's performance attracted an audience, distinguished, if not for rank, at least for almost all the talent and discrimination which Rome then afforded. The most noted, and the least expected, of the audience was the Cavalier Bernini himself, seated conspicuously in the centre of the theatre, and surrounded by Romanelli, Guido Ubaldo, Abbatini, Ottaviano Castelli, and nearly the whole of his school and numerous followers. After some trifling delay, the usual note of preparation sounded, the curtain drew up, and to the delight and surprise of the audience, the popular Formica of the Carnival came forward for the prologue, habited as the Calabrese Coviello, in the character of the *Direttore*, or manager of the theatre. He was followed by a crowd of young actors demanding the "soggetto" of the drama they were about to enact, with clamorous importunities. The preliminary gesticulations, the first accents of the Neapolitan dialect of Coviello, set the house in a roar; and Laughter, "holding both his sides," indulged himself freely, after his long privations, on the benches of the Fonderia. When silence was restored, Coviello opened the prologue,* by explaining to his followers the reason of his giving in to so idle an amusement as that of the acting of plays; and after an humorous description of the ardours of a Roman summer, and its enervating effects, not only on the body, but on the mind, he began to dictate the plan and object of the play he was about to present; when, to the utter amazement of many, and to the great consternation of

* These prologues were in prose.

all, Coviello, in dictating rules for a genuine Italian comedy, introduced as faults to be avoided and ridicules to be laughed at, the very scenes, the dialogues, and even the new-fangled machinery of the applauded theatre of the Vatican.

Passeri, the painter, friend, and biographer of Salvator Rosa, at this most audacious attack upon one whom he has described as "quel dragone, custode vigilante degli orti Esperidi," (the "dragon, the vigilant guardian of the Hesperian garden of patronage,") rose from his seat, and timidly turned his eyes upon the potent tyrant of the arts. But the dignity and prudence of Bernini did not permit him to testify the least emotion. With an affected indifference, an apparent unconsciousness of the attack he sustained, he coolly sat out the piece to the end. Not so his irritable poet and protégé, Ottaviano Castelli. Condemned to silence by the example of his master, he exhibited his rage, according to Passeri, "by violent movements of the head, and by such threatening gesticulations" as intimated a deep-seated and bitter vengeance.

The prologue being finished, the comedy began; in which all the old favourites of the *Commedie al soggetto* were introduced; but it is probable that the audience was too refined, and too deeply imbued with the tastes of the *seicentisti*, to relish its humour; for Passeri observes, that "non fu cosa considerabile"—"it was no great thing." The prologue, however, with its severe attack on Bernini and the reigning dramatic taste, was the subject of conversation throughout all Rome; and though one of the fashionable preachers of the day, a young ecclesiastic named Nicola Mussi, had taken upon himself the responsibility of the directorship of the Teatro Mignanelli; yet it was soon known that the originator of all, the manager, composer, scene-painter, and principal actor, was no other than the painter of Prometheus! the elegant *improvvisatore* of the Strada Babbuina. While some were applauding the wit and the courage of the fearless young artist, and others were censuring his temerity and insolence, envy and self-love, wounded in the very life-nerve of sensibility, were preparing to avenge the injury they had sustained from truth and taste, by means to which the base and *médiocre* are sure to resort. A comedy was announced for a particular day, to

be performed in the theatre of the Palazzo Sforza, in the Borgo Vecchio, under the direction of the poet Ottaviano Castellani, and the patronage of his Mæcenas, the Cavalier Bernini.

The *mot de l'énigme* was universally understood, and the public were prepared to witness the most signal vengeance that ever was taken on a bold and independent spirit, who dared to get the start of his age, and expose the follies and the vices by which it was degraded. The theatre was crowded at an early hour. Those who had a few days before so willingly laughed with the Coviello of the Teatro Mignanelli, now came as willingly to laugh *at* him; that he was present and conspicuously seated, was no impediment to the friendly intention.

The prologue opened with a tame parody of the prologue of Coviello. It exhibited a crowd of persons assembled to hear a *Commedia da recitarsi*, a written comedy, or one ready to be recited; and while the reciter (who had not yet appeared) was expected, a sort of conjuror, or, as the Italians call such personages, a *chiromante*, stepped from the crowd, and offered to tell the fortunes, and relate the lives, of any of the company who would show him their hand. The person who first offered himself to this inspection was, to all appearance, the *Formica* of the Carnival, habited and masked as the Coviello of the Mignanelli. The Chiromante having perused the lineaments of his hand, began what was intended for the history of Salvator Rosa; in which the grossest calumnies, interwoven with facts well known, left no doubt as to the personal allusion. He took for his groundwork the humble birth of Salvator in Naples, the miseries and misfortunes of his early life, his indigence and fruitless struggles in Rome, his adventures among the banditti of the Abruzzi; and upon this canvas he engrafted such follies, vices, and crimes as most degrade humanity, till, borne away by the rage of insatiable vengeance, and stimulated to greater exertion by the coldness of the disgusted and indignant audience, he burst forth into a sudden explosion of abuse against the profession which could admit such members into its body. As the audience consisted chiefly of the most eminent artists and virtuosi in Rome, this tirade was the signal for the most unequivocal manifestation of anger and professional indignation. The audience

rose simultaneously, and left the theatre. Even Bernini and Romanelli were obliged to follow the general example, lest they should be included in the conspiracy of Castellani, who in vain besought the spectators to return, assuring them that he meant no offence to the profession in general, and that his attacks were all directed against an individual who degraded it. None paused to receive his excuses; and he was left alone on his own stage, before his drama, which was to follow this dull and malignant prologue, had even begun.

A violent cabal was the result of these infamous calumnies, which the friends of Salvator Rosa designated as “cose improprie, mendaci, ed imposture,” “lies, impostures, and improprieties.”

The enemies of the young artist (and they were all whose pretensions and mediocrity could not stand the test of his acumen) crowded round the standard of the slanderous Castellani; while the few distinguished by their wit, judgment, and independence, became the partisans of one, whose spirit and genius were, in spite of every obstacle, now finding their own level.

Salvator, in whom the virtue of discretion so rarely manifested itself, behaved on this occasion with equal prudence and dignity. The attack, like the character of the miserable hireling Castellani, the bravo of his party, was below notice or resentment; and Salvator avenged himself on his calumniators by taking from this moment a higher position in society, both as a private and a professional man, than he had hitherto, by the fatality of circumstances, been enabled to occupy.

CHAPTER VI.

1639—1647.

WITH the Carvinal and summer of 1639 terminated the idle but not inelegant dissipations of Salvator Rosa. Although the light-hearted frolics of this gay and brilliant period of his life were enjoyed in the saloons of the great, in the

academies of the learned, and in the private theatres of the virtuosi of the day, (and these were chiefly artists and ecclesiastics,*) yet was this the epoch which furnished a ground-work for calumnies, which the spirit of party even still circulates in Italy, to the prejudice of one whose crime lay not in the freedom of his morals, or the licence of his conduct, but in the boldness of his opinions and the independence of his principles. Passeri, however, supposes that Salvator hesitated for a moment whether he would not pursue that path to notoriety which he had so successfully opened, by cultivating the drama and becoming a professed play-writer; but he soon gave up the idea, though a favourite one, because such compositions, “*come cose disgregate, non partoriranno troppo buono nome*”—“being unconnected with his profession, were injurious to his reputation:”—a proof of the gravity and respectability of a profession which Raphael and Michael Angelo had rendered almost sacred in public opinion.† He withdrew, therefore, with infinite prudence, from pursuits thus fascinating, and confined, as it is expressly said, “his modest recreations (*sue modeste recreazioni*)” to the intimate society of his particular friends.” Painting, the business of his life and the object of his ambition, was resumed with new ardour, and followed with an increasing success.

His vogue had now brought forward his genius; and the verses of the amusing *improvvisatore* did more for the author of the Prometheus than the Prometheus itself. Known as a dramatist, an actor, a poet, a painter, and a

* One of the great objections of Milton to academical education was, that men intended for the Church were permitted in such institutions *to act plays*. “Writhing and unboning their *clergy* limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of trincalos, buffoons, &c., in the eyes of courtiers and court ladies, their grooms and mademoiselles.”

† “Ses comedies furent fort à la mode, et chacun à son exemple voulut être acteur.”—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres*, tom. i.

Of these comedies I cannot find a trace, though all Salvator's biographers allude to them. In a letter which now lies before me, from the learned and excellent Abbate Cancelliari of Rome, it is said that Salvator Rosa accompanied his musical farces, composed by himself, upon various instruments. These were probably a species of *buffo-cantata*; but it is likely that his dramas were mere sketches or “*canevas*,” after the manner of the *commedia del arte*, which the actors filled up. His own parts he acted *al improvviso*. This style of composition is still followed in the minor theatres of Naples.—See *Goldoni's Memoirs*.

musician, all obstacles to fame were removed. The species of fashion he now enjoyed, however lightly founded, became of the most solid benefit; and commissions for his admirable landscapes poured in with a rapidity which required all his well-known facility to execute.*

Yet, with a success as brilliant as it was rapid, Salvator was again sinking into despondency. Insensible of the good he possessed, he smarted under the privation of that species of fame which he most emulated. It was in vain that his exquisite landscapes enriched the select gallery of the Palazzo Feodele,† and took their places among the chefs-d'œuvre of his own admired Titian in the princely gallery of the Spada.‡ The vogue which his landscapes and small figures obtained, rather wounded than satisfied the ambition of their author. His powerful genius demanded vastness of space, extension of form, and all the high concomitants of philosophical conceptions, historical incidents, and moral and poetical combinations. The elements of his Titans, his Regulus, his Catiline, were floating vaguely and as yet vainly in his imagination. He panted to obtain some of the great public works which would have admitted a display of these high and conscious powers; but they were in the exclusive gift of the Government and its partisans; and his attack on Bernini had deprived him for ever of advantages, which were daily lavished on Romanelli, and on others, whose mediocrity was their best recommendation to the jealous arbiter of the fine arts.

While Salvator thus repined at a destiny which threw

* "Datosi allora tutto a dipingere, ebbe molte commissioni per molti quadri, e come velocissimo era nell' operazione, facile assai gli riusciva il saziare ognuno che ne bramava: guadagno in poco tempo grosse somme di danaro."—*Pascoli*.

Salvator was wont to finish before night a cabinet picture begun in the morning.

† The Feodele gallery was in high estimation in the seventeenth century. But many of the great galleries of that age have merged into other collections, or have found their way to foreign countries. The mal-administration of their domestic affairs had reduced many of the Roman nobility to dispose of their finest pictures long before the French Revolution.

‡ These landscapes still hang in the Spada gallery. I am told that a celebrated Italian artist has said they are the only original pictures of Salvator now in Rome:—a strange assertion, which many in Rome will doubtless contest. Both the credulity and the scepticism of the Italian virtuosi are, to say the least of them, rather curious.

his genius into thralldom, and (as he deemed it) brought more profit than glory, his sudden and extraordinary success excited the rancorous envy of a profession accused beyond every other of indulging in that irritable self-love which views an enemy in every competitor, and is more jealous of the success than of the merit of a rival. The success of Salvator was of that kind which is never pardoned—a success obtained in brilliant society. The man and the artist had each their share in the malice thus excited. It was industriously circulated that the author of PROMETHEUS could not paint an historical picture; that he was incapable of executing anything beyond those small landscapes and marine pieces which owed their vogue to their originality.

But in granting him this one master-quality, they ceded him that which placed him above all who attacked and all who opposed him, and rendered him worthy to enter the lists with those two great masters of landscape, whose splendid reputations were at their acme when Salvator came forth “to share the triumph and partake the gale” of their popularity.

These illustrious men were Claude Lorraine and Gaspar Poussin.* The *figuristi*, as the historical painters were then affectedly called, in contradistinction to that new genus in the art, the *paesanti*, had been rapidly declining in number and in merit, when Adam Elzheimer,† called *Il Tedesco*, first opened a school of landscape in Rome under the pontificate of Paul V. The rapid progress made in this new and refreshing branch of art by Viola,‡ by Vincenzo Ar-

* Pietro Berrettini, or Pietro da Cortona, a contemporary of these great masters, though an historical painter, also executed landscapes of some merit, chiefly for the Sacchetti family, from whose once splendid gallery they have been transferred to the Capitol. An Italian critic has observed of Berrettini, “Era Pietro un pittore che faceva bene ciò che voleva, e così ancora i Paesi. Non che voglio paragonarlo in questo genere con Poussino, Claudio, e Salvator Rosa.”—*Risposta alle riflessioni critiche del Signor Marchese D’Argens*, p. 64.

† Adam Elzheimer, the son of a poor tailor, was born in 1574, and died in 1620, when Salvator Rosa was just five years old. Although he was the founder of a school of landscape, this beautiful branch of painting was occasionally and incidentally cultivated by the Caracci and their pupils, and it employed some of the first geniuses of the Roman and Lombard Schools. Among the pupils of Adam Elzheimer was David Teniers.

‡ Born in 1600, and died in his eightieth year. It became the fashion at

manno, and other disciples of the Oltramontanes, opened the route to that ultimate perfection which was obtained under Urban VIII., and which bestowed upon the reign of the Barberini pope the title of "Il secolo d'oro dei Paesanti,"—the golden age of landscape-painters.

At the moment when Salvator came to illustrate this golden age with new splendour, Claude Gelée, called Lorraine, reigned supreme over the school of landscape-painting in Rome, and, it may be added, in Europe. It is related in the Life of this extraordinary person, that it was the constant complaint of his father, Pierre Gelée, an humble pastry-cook in a little town in Lorraine, that his son Claude was so imbecile that he never could teach him to make a pie or heat an oven. Pierre's brother (a stonemason by trade) advised him to make the lad a priest, because the proverb says, "If your child is good for nothing else, he will be good for the Church." But there was as little chance of making Claude a priest as a baker; for if he could not be taught to make a pie, neither could he be brought to learn to read. Much parental persecution ensued. The "Imbecile" could feel, if he could not learn; and he escaped from the tyranny of the parental government, and hired himself as a servant of all-work with some Flemish artists who were going to study in Rome. It was at one of the initiatory festivals of his Oltramontane masters, that the culinary duties of Claude Gelée developed some latent talents for the gastronomic art, which his father had never been able to elicit: and Agostino Tassi, a Roman painter, whose tastes were of the palate as well as of the palette, seduced this pains-taking scrub from his masters, and hired him, at an increase of wages, in the double capacity of cook and colour-grinder.*

Rome at this period to reform the vignas and villas on the model of the fanciful buildings introduced by Viola into his landscapes. Of this fact the *Villa-Pia* near Rome is said to be an example.

* Agostino Tassi, "malvagio uomo, ma pittore eccellente," "a bad man, but a good painter," was one of the most extraordinary geniuses of his age. Having, for some of his many extravagances, been condemned to the galleys, he amused himself by sketching the scenes and groupings which his new situation presented to him, and which he afterwards reproduced with admirable effect in the frescoes with which he covered several of the palaces of Rome and Genoa. His house was filled with young artists, who assisted him, and whom he paid by his instructions, and by keeping a good table for them. Claude was hired simply "per le domestiche facende et per macignargli

It was in the studio of his new master that Claude first felt those aspirations to a new and higher calling, which, had they been devoted to another cause, were sufficiently miraculous to have been deemed the mysterious operation of grace working upon imbecility independently of its own volition, and beyond the sphere of its own energies.

From the stupor of unidea'd dulness, from the lowliness of homely avocation, from an obscurity the most apparently impervious to any ray of prosperity, suddenly started forth one of the most successful candidates for immortality, which the art of painting ever produced. He who had not sufficient comprehension to make a tart or to spell a homily, was now involved in the study of pure abstractions, calculating refractions of light, and measuring aerial perspectives by luminous or ideal lines.

"Le voilà," says one of the briefest, but most delightful of his biographers (the Baron Denon), "le voilà qui établit dans le vague les graves et solides vérités de la géométrie; en un mot, le voilà devenu le plus grand paysagiste de l'univers."

In his thirty-sixth year, Claude Gelée was cooking cutlets and grinding colours; in ten years afterwards, Claude Lorraine appears on the scene, the friend of the elegant Cardinal Bentivoglio, the distinguished favourite of Urban VIII., the courted of him who was courted by all, Bernini, and the *patent* painter of fashion to all the aristocracy of Europe. "The road to his gallery (says one of his historians) was closed against all who held not the highest rank in the state." Pontiffs, potentates, and princes, became the exclusive candidates for the splendid products of his creative genius. His enormous prices limited his purchasers to the enormously wealthy; and the public were in a manner shut out from bidding for pictures of which *three* popes, successively, and two sovereigns, sought to be the exclusive monopolists.

Whatever could be spared of the fashionable predilection which existed in favour of Claude, was given to his eminent condisciple and pupil, Gaspar Dughet; who had, by the favour of his first master, kinsman, and protector, Nicholas

i colori"—for domestic services and to grind colours. Tassi endeavoured to give him some instructions in painting, and failed in the first instance; but he lived to see this *scrub* become the first painter of the age.

Poussin, taken the name of Poussin.* Taught in the schools, and protected by the influence of such men, and above all strongly recommended by Bernini,† Gaspar Poussin began his career under circumstances so intoxicating, that his success is the more to be admired; for adversity is the true school of genius; which, like religion, requires persecution to prove its divine origin.

The effect of the ever-effective *chiaro oscuro* had been reiterated to repletion, by Adam Elzheimer and his school. It was the genius of Claude which developed the new mystery of perspective, until his glorious pictures seemed to open vistas through the walls they decorated. The creator of a vegetable aristocracy, this master painter of the elements ennobled the nature he copied, and was the first to stamp a beau ideal upon her material aspect, as Raphael had before done upon the human countenance.

Those suns that seemed to set in a radiance which rivalled their meridian; those waters that never rippled but to summer breezes; that halo of light and lustre which fell over Eden scenes of almost unearthly loveliness; the splendour of architecture; the fair round forms of ruminating cattle, reposing in deep shades, or cooling their fervid sides in lucid streams, afforded combinations, which, in their endless variety, seemed to exhaust the powers of scenic nature, and to bid defiance to rivalry or imitation.

Gaspar Poussin, more learned than Claude, and more deeply tinged with the profound erudition of their common master Nicholas, produced pictures, in which every image was susceptible of a commentary. Deficient in the brilliant idealism and splendid colouring of Lorraine, his works are characterized by a pastoral elegance and sylvan propriety, which produced for him the title of the "*gentile artefice*."‡

* Gaspar Poussin, born in 1613, died in 1675. He and Vandervert were both pupils of Claude. Gaspar, however, came into his studio the highly finished pupil of N. Poussin, with whom it is supposed that Claude also studied.

† Gaspar Poussin painted the frescoes of Bernini's palace for nothing, and ever afterwards the Cavalier was his "*proneur titré*."

‡ Poussin had, in common with Salvator, the gift of celerity, and he too began and finished his landscapes in a day. His great pictures are in the Palazzo Pamfili Doria at Rome, and they give the name of "*Gran Sala di Poussino*" to one of its apartments. The finest is said to be that of the

He scattered over his landscapes the most beautiful features of the Tuscan and Tiberine territories; and the broad foliage of his elegant plantains, his limpid fountains and silver streamlets, his gentle undulations and fair pavilions, his perpetual verdure and cool skies, tempered down to the delicacy of his Arcadian figures,* exhibited a nature chosen and selected with practised judgment, such as she is seen in the descriptions of Tasso, of the fairy gardens of the voluptuous Armida. In the works of both these illustrious masters, in the radiant sun-lights of Claude, and the serene heavens of Poussin, the terrestrial world lies wrapped in a sweet repose.

Nature, in her tranquil beauty, always appears the benefactress of man, not his destroyer; the source of his joys, not the tomb of his hopes and the scourge of his brief existence; and such she appeared in the works of the two powerful geniuses who presided over landscape-painting, when Salvator Rosa came forth upon that arena, which they had hitherto exclusively occupied, and dispelled the splendid but "unreal mockery" of elements always genial, and nature always undisturbed. *His* magic pencil threw all into life and motion and fearful activity. The "famoso pittore delle cose morali" could not separate the scene from the actor. He could not separate subordinate matter from him, who was mocked in being told he was made to rule over it: and representing Nature as he saw her in those mighty regions he had most studied, *he* painted her the inevitable agent of human suffering; mingling all her great operations with the passions and interests of man, blasting him with her thunder-bolt! wrecking him in her storms! burying

Bridge of Lucacio on the Via di Tivoli. In an adjoining chamber are some landscapes by Salvator Rosa.

* They look like poets in disguise, realizing their own pastoral dreams in scenes of their own ideal conception. "Le figure non sono d'ordinario, bifolchi, pastori ed armenti, come ne' quadri fiaminghi; ma personaggi presi dalla favola o dall' antica storia."—*Ticozzi*.

These figures, however, were generally painted by Nicholas Poussin, as Claude's were by Borguignone and Filippo Lauri. Claude was wont to say, I sell my landscapes, and make a present of my figures, "Vendo i paesi, e regalo le figure." His oxen, goats, and aquatic birds, are however deemed admirable; but moral nature seemed shut out from his view. He saw her in her tangible forms, and not, like Salvator Rosa, in her spirit.

him in her avalanches! and whelming him in her tornadoes! *

The least of his landscapes was pregnant with moral interest, and calculated to awaken human sympathies. His deep and gloomy forests, whose impervious shade is relieved by the silver bark of the shattered oak that forms the foreground, are only given as the shelter of the formidable bandit, whose bold and careless figure, strangely armed and wildly habited, fixes the eye beyond all the merits of the scenic representation. The long line of stony pathway cut through masses of impending rock, is but the defile in which the gallant cavalier, bent on some generous enterprise, is overtaken by the pitiless outlaw—or, by the rush of storms, which seem to threaten destruction at every step his frightened steed advances. The way-worn traveller, the benighted pilgrim, the shipwrecked mariner, introduced as accessories into the main scene, become images that engage the heart as well as the eye, and give to the inanimate character of landscape a moral action and an historical interest.

Such drear and fearful aspects of nature, mingled with such views of society, concealed an *arrière pensée*, which, if it did not strike at once upon the apprehension of the spectator, worked its way through his imagination. The *many*, in gazing on the works of Salvator, felt, they knew not why—the *few* (and those few the great) became enamoured of pictures, which gave them a sensation, even though that sensation was one of terror: and the public, always idolatrous of originality, and prone to excitement, were not to be satiated by representations powerfully calculated to awaken all their sympathies.

The people of Rome are described as moving in dusky groups through the hallowed round of the Pantheon, on the festival of San Giovanni Decollato, muttering their untaught criticisms, and after having enquired, "Have you seen the Titian, the Coreggio, the Veronese, or the Parmegiano," never failed to add "and our Signor Salvator?" for *our* Signor Salvator need fear no competition with the

* "Admirable paysagiste, son style austère, ses formes terribles excitent le frissonnement qui fait éprouver la nature à la vue des montagnes escarpées et des rocs sourcilleux."—*Monge*.

Titians and Guidos, the Guercinos, nor with any other master.

The reverence of the people, which had bestowed upon Rosa the title of the Signor, and their exclamations when his pictures were exposed in the Rotunda, "stomached many honourable men," says Passeri; "and the ostentatious plaudits of his admirers served but to increase the mass of envy he had already excited; though he, poor gentleman, was innocent of it."* The title of "Il Signor," conferred upon Rosa by the people of Rome, was the only one he ever received. But the aristocracy of Nature had been admitted by her unsophisticated children; and the letters patent of nobility which she had conferred, were acknowledged as legitimate claims to reverence and esteem.

Neither coping with Claude Lorraine, nor with Gaspar Poussin; nor associating with men whose plain and rustic characters,† in despite of their professional talents, stood curiously and coarsely opposed to his own, Salvator, with respect to his fraternity, stood alone

"Among them, but not of them,

In a shroud of thoughts which were not *their* thoughts,"

as singular in his habits of life, as in the bold originality of his works.

A stoic upon principle, but a voluptuary by temperament, Salvator endeavoured to assimilate opinions and tastes so little in accordance. Scarcely escaped from penury and absolute want, he already began to find

"Le superflu, chose très nécessaire."

His dress became as remarkable for its studied elegance,

* Speaking of the three celebrated landscape painters of the seventeenth century, Lanzi observes, that the influence of fashion alternately exalted Claude, G. Poussin, and Salvator Rosa; but that in the beginning of the eighteenth, Rosa united all suffrages, and was "il più acclamato."

† Claude Lorraine, out of his art, remained the same inept and simple person, even in the height of his reputation, as when he was cooking and grinding colours for Tassi. His mind was like a dark space into which some accidental aperture admits one bright gleam of light.

His friend G. Poussin, who imitated without possessing the learning of his master Nicholas, was a simple and ignorant man, who had no existence out of his workroom, except in the chase: and he devoted himself to this pursuit with such incautious ardour, that it brought on a complication of disorders, of which he died in the meridian of his reputation.

as it was affectedly free from the showy splendour of that ostentatious age.* “It was a fine sight (says his friend Baldinucci) to see him pass along the streets of Rome, with a certain dignified deportment, followed by a servant with a silver-hafted sword, while all who met him gave way to him.” The many pictures he painted of himself, and the descriptions left of his person by his contemporary biographers, are proofs, that the personal vanity which his enemies have numbered among his vices, was not without some foundation; and it appears that if he had been good for nothing else, he would have been at least *bon à peindre*.

A person so distinguished, a character so ardent, with passions which time failed to subdue, and an imagination which lent its magic even to the merest objects of sense, naturally involved him at this period of his life, and in a society where love was the business of all ages and ranks, in ties, to which he brought more truth, devotion, and sincerity, than he found.†

A cantata which he wrote at this period, and which was set to music by his friend Cesti, gives the impression of his being the most miserable and discontented of mankind. “All his lyrics,” (says the elegant writer, who first made them known to the English public,)—“All his lyrics were complaints against his mistress or mankind. But in his fifth cantata, he deems his afflictions, like the stars of the firmament, countless; and makes the melancholy confession, that out of six lustres which he had passed, he had not known the enjoyment of one happy day.” This querulous melancholy, inseparable from the temperament of the highest order of genius, which is so prone to feel and to suffer, gives a charm to the character of Salvator, which his occasional

* “Vestiva gallante, ma non alla cortegiana; senza gale, e superfluità.”

† One of the most beautiful of his cantatas, rescued by Dr. Burney from oblivion, is a proof of this assertion. It is a vow of fidelity to his mistress, under all circumstances of time and change; and if the terminating stanza be deemed a conceit, it is certainly the prettiest that Italian poesy has been guilty of.

“E se la natura avara
Del suo mortal tesoro
Di questo crin mai le rubasse l'oro
Povero, ma contento
Lo vedro bianco
E l'amero d'argento.”

Cantata VII., set to music by Luigi Rossi.

flashes of gaiety and humour, his splenetic pleasantry and comic representations of the follies and vices of society, rather relieve and heighten, than decrease. While his pathetic cantatas, and their plaintive compositions, drew tears from the brightest eyes in Rome, the "potent, grave, and reverend signors" of the conclave, did not disdain to solicit admission to those evening *conversazioni* of the Via Babuina, where the comic Muse alone presided; but where, under the guise of national naïveté, veiled in a rustic dialect, and set off by the most humorous gesticulations, truths were let drop with impunity, more perilous than those, for translating which from the pages of Lucian a protégé of the Grand Duke de' Medici was at the same moment confined by the Inquisition.

It was in these *conversazioni* that Salvator tried the point of the sarcasms against the church, the government, and the existing state of literature and the arts, which were afterwards given to the world in his published satires, and which still draw down on his memory the unfounded calumnies that embittered his life.

The manner of the daring improvvisatore, as left on record by his chroniclers, or handed down by tradition, was no less singular and attractive, than the matter which inspired him. The apartment in which he received his company, was affectedly simple. The walls, hung with faded tapestry, exhibited none of his beautiful pictures, which might well have attracted attention from the actor to his works. A few rows of forms included all the furniture; and they were secured at an early hour by the impatience of an audience, select and exclusive; either invited by himself or introduced by his friends. When the company were assembled, and not before, Salvator appeared in the circle, but with the air of an host rather than that of an exhibitor, until the desire to hear him recite his poetry, or to improvisate, expressed by some individual, produced a general acclamation of entreaty. It was a part of his coquetry to require much solicitation: and when at last he consented, he rose with an air of timidity and confusion, and presented himself with his lute, or a roll of paper containing the heads of his subject. After some graceful hesitation, a few precluding chords, or a slight hem! to clear his full, deep voice, the scene changed: the elegant, the sublime Salvator disappeared, and was re-

placed by the gesticulating and grimacing Coviello, who, long before he spoke, excited such bursts of merriment, "con le più ridicolose smorfie al suo modo Napolitano" (with the most laughable grimaces in the true Neapolitan style), that even the gravest of his audience were ready to burst. When the adroit *improvvisatore* had thus wound up his auditory to a certain pitch of exultation, and prepared them at least to receive with good-humour whatever he might hazard, he suddenly stepped forth and exclaimed with great energy, in the broad Neapolitan of the Largo di Castello; "Siente chisso vè, auza gli uocci."* He then began his recitation: "Whatever were its faults of composition," says one of his biographers, "it was impossible to detect them, as long as he recited. Nor could their charm be understood by those who did not hear them recited by himself. When some of these productions were published after his death, it was supposed that they would lose much of their apparent merit, because his fervid and abundant genius, rich in its natural fertility, despised the trammels of art, as submitting talent to mean and slavish rules. The contrary, however, was the fact; for they excited universal admiration."†

With a thirst for praise, which scarcely any applause could satisfy, Salvator united a quickness of perception that rendered him suspicious of pleasing, even at the moment he was most successful. A gaping mouth, a closing lid, a languid look, or an impatient hem! threw him into utter confusion, and deprived him of all presence of mind, of all power of concealing his mortification. When he perceived that some witty sally had fallen lifeless, that some epigrammatic point had escaped the notice of his auditors, he was wont to exclaim to his particular friends, when the strangers were departed, "What folly to lose my time and talent in reading before these beasts of burden, who feel nothing, and have no intellect beyond what is necessary to understand

* A Neapolitan idiom, meaning "Awaken and heed me," but literally translated, "Listen and open your eyes!"

† This and many other passages in the various and contradictory lives of Salvator, prove that his recitations contained the elements of his satires. Of these recitations it is said that there were taken down, "Infinite copie à penna che subito sparsero per tutta l'Italia" (many copies in MS. which were quickly spread through all Italy). Five editions of the Satires themselves were published in Italy before 1770.

the street ballads of the *blind band*.”* Such is the power which an insatiable love of glory may hold, even over the most elevated intellect.

While the ambition of Salvator demanded a public and an audience to do the honours by his singular authorship, his warm heart and refined tastes had other wants, more difficult to satisfy. In the crowd which flocked to his *conversazioni* to be amused, there were some who preferred the original and interesting discourse of the man, to the recitations of the enterprising *improvvisatore*; and it was the singular felicity of Salvator Rosa to have surrounded himself at this period, and to have retained through life, a little band of intimates, whose tastes and views and talents, coinciding with his own, formed that true and only basis of friendship, sympathy, and equality.

At the head of this band stood Carlo Rossi, a Roman citizen, worthy of Rome's best days, an Italian banker of the old Medicean stamp, a scholar of no ordinary learning, a judge if not a writer of poetry, and a distinguished patron of the arts. Abounding in wealth and taste, he relieved the toil of the counting-house, in which, like old Cosmo de' Medici, he himself daily presided, by recreations and pursuits the most refined and elevated; and he had cultivated music with such success, that, after his brother, the celebrated musician and composer Luigi Rossi, he was esteemed the first harp-player in Italy, in an age too, when that beautiful and graceful instrument was more in fashion than it has been ever since. Carlo Rossi had become acquainted with Salvator through his professional merits; having been induced to seek him out by his exquisite landscapes exhibited in the Pantheon. But he soon discovered in the man whom he had at first sought as an artist to enrich his noble gallery, all the principles, acquirements, and pursuits, which he desired in the friend of his intimate hours. The banker, and the painter, the man of business and the man of genius, became inseparable. The friendship of Carlo Rossi fre-

* In his own Neapolitan, (to which he always had recourse when under strong emotion,) “Aggio io bene speso lo tiempo mio, in leggere le fatiche mie alli somari, e a gente che nulla intienne, avvezza solamente a sentire non autro che la canzona dello cieco.” These “ciechi” still haunt the streets of Italy, to the delight of strangers. They are bands of itinerant musicians composed of the blind.

quently rushed between Salvator and the ruin prepared for him by his enemies. The counsels of Carlo Rossi were alone capable of soothing the perturbations of that haughty and fiery spirit, which perpetually plunged its victim into new and perilous difficulties. It was for Carlo Rossi that Salvator worked best and oftenest; he was the comforter, whose intimacy so often rendered his life endurable, and the mourner whose tenderness conferred the last honours at his death. The little chapel to the left of the "chiesa di Santa Maria di Monte Santo" at Rome, is a monument of the respect and tenderness with which the first citizen of Italy, in the seventeenth century, honoured the memory of the first of her artists.*

Of this band also, were the Count Ugo Maffei of Volterra, (whose historical name recalls that highly gifted family, which for two centuries illustrated by its taste and erudition the literature of Italy,†) and the learned Baptista Ricciardi of the university of Pisa, whose epistolary correspondence with Salvator Rosa has called forth such generous and noble sentiments, as are alone sufficient to rescue the maligned character of his illustrious friend from the calumnies with which party spirit has blackened it.

Among the intimates of Salvator were also the quaint, but excellent Passeri, more renowned for his piety than his pictures, though a disciple of Domenichino,—Francesco Redi, one of the most celebrated literati of his age,—Fra

* The Rossis were by descent Neapolitans, but were naturalized citizens of Rome. About the time here alluded to (1640), Luigi Rossi was in the enjoyment of great celebrity, for his canzonetti and his opera of "Giuseppe figlio di Giacobbe," which was still extant towards the conclusion of the last century. Some of his *motets*, to be found in the Christ-Church collection, are esteemed equal to those of Capella. The words of the canzonette beginning,

"Or che la notte del silenzio amica,"

and of another called *La Fortuna*, are supposed to have been written by Salvator Rosa.

Carlo Rossi was a merchant, as well as a banker, and one of the wealthiest and most respected in Italy.

† Ugo Maffei was afterwards chargé d'affaires de France at Rome, where he educated his celebrated nephew Paul Alexander Maffei, one of the most learned men of the age, and author of some ingenious works on *virtu*. The "Merope" of Scipio Maffei excited the jealousy of Voltaire, and was the only tragedy of distinguished celebrity for ninety years previous to the productions of Alfieri.

Reginaldo Sgambatisti of the order of Predicatori, an elegant preacher and a good Latin poet, always named as "l' amico intrinseco," "the intimate friend" of Salvator,—the acute and clever Padre Oliva, general of the Jesuits,—Baldinucci the painter, and the biographer of painters,—and the elegant and all-accomplished Duke di Salviati, who conferred upon Rosa the title so well merited of

"Famoso pittore delle cose morale."*

Such are the men who formed the intimate society of one who is accused of having frequented the company, and participated in the orgies, of the low and the profligate; and of whom it is said to this day in Rome, that he lived exclusively with the *populaccio* of the Trastevere.

The musical talents of the composer of several of the best cantatas then in vogue, drew also around him the greatest masters of an age in which music was rapidly assuming an ascendancy over all the other arts. Cesti,† Legrenze, Cavalli, Ferrari, Luigi Rossi, and Giacomo Carissimi, were not only the *habitués* of Rosa's house, but were all emulous of setting his verses to music, and this too at the very moment when that satirist was lashing the profession, sometimes

* The Salviati family was one of the most distinguished in Tuscany. Besides its celebrated Cardinal, who, as Grand Prior of Rome and Admiral of the Maltese order, rendered himself so formidable to the Ottoman Empire, it produced many other distinguished persons. Amongst these, the young Duke Salviati was so enamoured of a picture painted by Salvator for Signor Francesco Cordini of Florence, (Philosophy presenting a mirror to Nature,) that he made it the subject of an ode, which begins

"Quel gelida pianeta
Che di luce non sua vago risplende," &c.

† The Padre Marc-Antonio Cesti of Volterra was a Minor Conventual, a pious ecclesiastic, and one of the most fashionable musical composers of the day. He gave his first opera, the "Orontea," to the Italian stage in 1649, and it remained a stock-piece for upwards of thirty years. In 1660 the Padre was still a first tenor singer in the Pope's chapel. The only *scena* of his *Orontea* extant was found in a MS. music-book of S. Rosa, in 1777, by Dr. Burney. Passeri says of him, "Così celebre per la sua abilità nel canto e nei componimenti," &c.

Cavalli and Ferrari were at this time composing operas for Venice and Bologna, and for the private theatricals of Rome: no public theatre being permitted there before the year 1671, when one was opened in the Torre della Nona. To these musicians of the seventeenth century may be added Monti Verde, Sacrati, and Tignali.

with the nervous conciseness of Juvenal, and sometimes with the Attic severity of Lucian. Observing the manners of an age in which he deemed it an indignity to have been born, with the deep and philosophic view which distinguished all he thought and produced, Salvator perceived that the Church was making the same monopoly of music as she had done of painting, and would in the end degrade one art (as she had already deteriorated the other) to the worst purposes. The finest singers were now shut up in the Roman monasteries; and all Rome was then resorting to the Spirito Santo, to hear the sister Veronica, a beautiful nun, who awakened emotions in her auditors that did not *all* belong to heaven.*

It was in the palaces of the Porporati that the first musical dramas were given, which bore any resemblance to the modern opera,† by which they are now succeeded in the "Argentina;" and the choir of the pontifical chapel (which gave the musical tone to all the churches of Christendom, while it engrossed all the patronage of the Government) was gradually abandoning those learned combinations, and that

* Evelyn mentions this nun, whom it was the fashion to hear when he was at Rome.

† The first attempt at a regular drama was made at Rome in one of these palaces as early as 1632, three years before Salvator's first arrival there. It was called "Il Ritorno di Angelica nella India," and was composed by the then fashionable secular composer Tignali. Public operas were at this time performing in Venice and Bologna.

It may be curious to observe, that the instruments which were then found in the secular orchestras of Italy, were the organ, viol, viol de gamba, harp, lute, guitar, spinette, harpsichord, theorbo, and trumpet: while the court band of Louis XIII. and XIV. only consisted of the far-famed

"Four-and-twenty fiddlers all in a row;"

and even they were imported from Italy. The first and the most distinguished was Baptiste Lulli, brought from Florence by Maria de' Medici, at the age of fourteen. From a simple *violonier*, he became the founder of the French opera, and the model upon which Campra, Destouches, and other French composers founded their braying monotones. At the same period in England, the music of Lawes and Bird was laid aside as profane, and replaced by those pious discords,

Such as from lab'ring lungs enthusiast blows,
High sounds attempted through the vocal nose.

Vicenzio Galileo (the father of the celebrated astronomer) remarks, however, in his *Dialogo della Musica*, that the best Italian lyres were made for the English market.

solemn and affecting simplicity, which were calculated to answer the purposes of a passionate devotion, and to satisfy at the same moment the taste of the amateur and the enthusiasm of the devotee.

While the music of the Church was gradually assuming an effeminate character, the palaces of the great were filled with the most worthless of the profession, of both sexes.* The genius which went to the composition of the finest music, was then, as now, less prized and rewarded than the voice which executed it;† and the profligacy of the public singers in Italy was no impediment to their reception into the first families of the country. Upon this shameless laxity of manners, and the visible degradation of ecclesiastical music, Salvator fell with a puritan's severity, scarcely surpassed by the anathemas of Calvin, or the vituperations of Erasmus. He attacked the style of singing in the pontifical chapel.‡

* “ Il principe in cirar questa *canaglia*
Scandolo della corte, e de' palazzi ! ”

S. Rosa, Satira Ima.

† “ Chiama in Roma più gente alla sua udienza
L' Arpa d' una Licisca, cantatrice,
Che la campana della sapienza.”—*Ibid.*

What a vast difference was there between the remuneration of a Catalani and a Rossini !

‡ See the first Satire from “ Che scandolo è il sentir ” to “ e gighe e sarabande alla distesa,” of which the following is a very *un-poetical* translation :—

Oh shameless ! thus to hear an hireling band,
In holy temples raise a voice profane—
Mount sacred rostrums with sol fa in hand,
And hymn their God in bacchanalian strain—
A mass or vespers bray, bark hallelujahs,
And roar their pater-nosters and their glorias.
Where sinful eyes should drop their penance tear,
Where sinful hearts should woo returning grace,
The dilettante penitent, all ear,
Seeks faults in tenors, beauties in a bass ;
While thrill's or fall's discordant shriek or howl
Lulls or distracts the vacillating soul.
Each sacred sanctuary now is seen,
Like some rude temple of the god of wine,
A Noah's ark, where many a beast unclean
Profanes the altar and defiles the shrine ;
While in loose strain the Miserere's given,
And wafts the soul upon a jig to Heaven.

In

He attacked the vices of a profession which now, beyond every other, received the special patronage of the lords of the Conclave; and though his efforts at reformation were as yet confined to his recitations, and to the frank utterance of opinions over which he held no control, yet these philippics increased the number of his enemies, even more than an attack on religion itself would have done.*

While, however, all the singers in Rome, with their patrons and partisans, took the field against the satirist, the great composers, distinguished alike for their genius and their morals, rallied round him; and the musical album of Salvator, brought a century after his death into England, (the land which has always been *true* to his merits, and in sympathy with his genius,) is a record that he offended none but those whose enmity was distinction.†

Among the other distinguished persons whom the poetical reputation of Salvator Rosa brought to the conversazioni of the Via Babbuina was the venerable Conte Carpigna, a

In the original the last lines stand—

“Cantar su la ciaccona il Miserere
Et con stilo da farza e da commedia
E gighe e sarabande alla distesa.”

* Salvator, however, was not the only *censor* of musical morals. In the “Discorsi di Musica di Vincenzio Chiavelloni,” published in Rome in 1668, a severe attack was made on the morals of musicians, after the manner of Salvator. These diatribes were *recited* by the author in a musical academy, as Salvator recited his “Musica;”—“and to say the truth,” says Zeno, “their morals wanted as much correction as their music.”

† “Among the musical MSS. purchased at Rome in 1770, one that ranks the highest in my own favour was the music-book of Salvator Rosa, the painter, in which are contained not only the airs and cantatas set by Carissimi, Cesti, Luigi (Rossi), Cavalli, Legrenze, Capellino, Pasqualini, and Bandini, of which the words of several are by Salvator Rosa, but eight entire cantatas, written, set, and transcribed by this celebrated painter himself. The book was purchased of his grand-daughter, who occupied the house in which her ancestor had lived and died. *The hand-writing was ascertained by collation with his letters and satires*, of which the originals are preserved by his descendants. The historians of Italian poetry, though they often mention Salvator as a satirist, seem never to have heard of his lyrical productions; and as the book is not only curious for the music it contains, but for the poetry, I shall present my readers with a particular account of its contents, &c.—Other single airs by Luigi and Legrenze, the words by Salvator Rosa, fill up the volume, in which there is nothing so precious as the musical and poetical compositions of Rosa.”—*Dr. Burney's History of Music.*

Roman nobleman of high rank, and one of the most noted patrons of his day. He was old and blind, and had never seen any of Salvator's pictures; but he had become so enamoured of his character, and of the talents which his own remaining senses permitted him to appreciate, that he was desirous of bequeathing some work of the poet-painter to his posterity; and on the verge of the tomb he bespoke a picture from him. This picture was ordered to be on a grand scale, and the subject was left to the artist. The subject chosen was a battle; and this battle-piece (one of the first great figure-pieces *bespoken* from Salvator) was the celebrated picture of which Borgognone was wont to say, "that there he had acquired all his principles of taste, judgment, and execution" in that arduous and particular style of painting, in which he himself afterwards so eminently excelled.*

About the same period also Carlo Rossi bespoke a figure-piece from Salvator, who stipulated for the choice of his own subject, and produced his "Sorceress." For this picture, according to his own testimony, he only received fifteen doubloons. Rossi in the course of time was offered for it four hundred scudi; and Salvator, in a letter to his friend Ricciardi, says of it, "I have prophesied that when I am no more, it will bring a thousand." Carlo Rossi was, no doubt, of the same opinion; for, to distinguish this picture from every other in his gallery, (then one of the first in Italy,) a silken curtain was hung before it. The curiosity it excited was insatiable.†

* Giacomo Cortese (called "il Borgognone," from Burgundy, his birth-place) was a soldier of fortune, who became enamoured of painting during his Italian campaigns. The battle of Constantine in the Vatican is related to have first fixed his vocation. He exchanged his sword for the pencil, and studied in most of the principal cities of Italy; but an unfortunate love-affair finally drove him into the sanctuary of the Church, and he took the habit of the Jesuits at Rome, where he continued till the year 1676 to pray and paint, and "to fight all his battles o'er again" with such life and energy that (says one of his biographers of his pictures) "*sembra di vedere il Coraggio che combatte per l'onore e per la vita; e di udirve il suono delle trombette, l'anitrire de' cavalli, e le strida di che cade*"—one seems to see Courage fighting for honour and for life, and to hear the sound of the trumpets, the neighing of the horses, and the screams of the wounded.

† Salvator, describing this picture in one of his letters, says, "It is in length two braccia and a quarter, and one and a half in height. Its price was fifteen doubloons, and it was done twenty years back."

While occupied on a subject so congenial to his wild and sombre imagination, it appears that Salvator painted as he thought, and wrote as he painted: for his poetical "incantation," set to music by Cesti, may be assigned to this period.* This singular production is asserted to be "the happiest specimen of the strength and imagination of his poetry." It is a magical incantation of one distracted by love and by revenge. It bears a singular coincidence with the spells of Shakspeare's Hecate,† and intimately assimi-

* Dr. Burney is of opinion, that this incantation furnished the idea of Purcell's celebrated cantata, beginning

"By the croaking of the toad."

† This coincidence is so striking, that one might be tempted to suppose it was an imitation, but that Salvator's acquaintance with Shakspeare's works "comes not within the prospect of belief." In one who, like Audrey, has "to thank the gods for not making her poetical," to meddle with this *incantation* would be sacrilege. Its translation would have come best from *him* who has conjured up the mysterious agency of "Manfred," and imagined scenes which the pencil of Salvator could best have illustrated.

CANTATA DI S. ROSA.

All' incanto, all' incanto!
 E chi non mosse il ciel mova Acheronte.
 Io vo magici modi
 Tentar profane note
 Erbe diverse, e nodi,
 Ciò che arrestar può le celeste rote,
 Mago circolo
 Onde gelide
 Pesci varij
 Acque chimiche
 Neri balsami
 Misti polveri
 Pietre mistiche
 Serpi e nottole
 Sanguis putridi
 Molli viscere,
 Secche mummie
 Ossa e vermini.
 Suffumigij ch' anneriscano,
 Voci orribili che spaventino,
 Linfe torbide ch' avvelenino,
 Stille fetide che corrompino,
 Ch' offuschino,
 Che gelino,
 Che guastino,

lates the genius of one who was the Byron of painting, with his who was the Salvator of poetry. The character of Salvator's genius was altogether northern; so palpably northern, that the Italian ultras of modern times have pronounced his anathema, by placing him high in the school of *Romanticism*, with those whom it is disloyalty to praise, Boccaccio and Ariosto. The superhuman agency which Salvator loved to employ both in his pictorial and poetical productions, was preferably selected from that sombre mythology, which was the inspiration of Shakspeare and the charm of Ossian. In his powerful originality, he turned with disgust from the worn-out imagery both of the Christian and heathen mythologies, from simpering seraphs and smirking cupids, from wrathful gods and tortured martyrs. When obliged by the tyranny of circumstances to select a subject from either, he chose by preference Saul and the Witch of Endor! the fate of Prometheus, (the embodying of a deep philosophy,) and the rebellion of the giants, a dogma in all religions, as being illustrative of a physical fact salient to the eyes of all nations.

Thus producing at the same moment a poem and a picture, a recitation and a cantata, "Mandando fuori con l' opere, spiritosi pensieri, e talora bizzarre invenzioni," the Roman public beheld him with admiration.

His "Sorceress" had scarcely taken its place in the gallery of Carlo Rossi, when he executed for the same liberal friend his "Socrates swallowing Poison,"* and also for the gallery Sonnini his "Prodigal Son." He now gave full

Ch' acidano,
 Che vincano l' onde Stigie.
 In quest' atra caverna
 Ove non giunse mai raggio di sole,
 Dalle Tartaree scuole
 Trarro la turba inferna
 Farò ch' un nero spiro
 Arda un cipresso, un mirto,
 E mentre a poco, a poco
 Vi struggerò l' imago sua di cera
 Farò che a ignoto foco
 Sua viva imago pera,
 E quand' arde la finta, arda la vera.

* David, the chief of the modern French School, has treated the same subject under the title of *Les dernières heures de Socrate*.

scope to his versatile genius, and painted with an almost equal success, in the most opposite styles, colossal figures and miniature landscapes, "*capricci*" for the court of San Bartolomeo, and altar-pieces for the churches of Lombardy, where the court intrigues of the Vatican, and the envy of the academicians of St. Luke, could throw no obstacles in the way of his rising reputation. The Cardinal Omodei of Milan, struck by the pictures of Salvator during his visit to Rome, induced the fathers of the church and convent of San Giovanni Case-rotte, on his return, to bespeak from that painter their great altar-piece. The subject chosen by Salvator was Purgatory;* and the horrors of this probationary hell were depicted with all the terrible fidelity of one to whom human suffering was familiar; of one who had studied terror at its source, amidst volcanic explosions; who had *seen* the living sea of flame he *painted*, pouring destruction over suffering humanity, and burying in its merciless course man and his proudest monuments.

The Purgatory of Salvator is composed of two subjects; the suffering souls beneath raising their agonized looks and clenched hands in supplication to the Virgin, and that Virgin, seated above in glory, in her character of "*Nostra Maria Virgine del soffragio*." The smiling benignity of her countenance, however, exhibits no sympathy derogatory to divine complacency; she appears insensible to the cries of her suppliants, and an angel in waiting in vain points out to her particular notice some spirits (who had, it appears, a friend at court).

This picture, which the Milanese still assert to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of Salvator, has by some been deemed a satire.

* This fine picture, which is now familiar to every English traveller, in the gallery of the Brera of Milan, where also may be seen a fine St. Jerome, by the same hand, was among the first seized by the French on their entrance into that city. The admiration of the French for the works of Rosa is as singular as it is boundless, since, of all painters, he is the most foreign to the French School. This taste has in a great measure grown up since the Revolution, as the following eulogium on Salvator by a French critic tends to prove:—

"Doué d'une imagination brillante et fouguese l'habitude des grandes pensées, des conceptions vastes et élevées, en aurait fait un peintre digne d'éterniser par son mâle pinceau les glorieux évènements d'une révolution politique telle que la nôtre: mais il vécut trop tôt, et trop loin des bords de la Seine."—*Galerie de Florence, Monge.*

By others it was taken *tout de bon*; and it excited so much admiration in the public, in spite of the attacks of all the painters in Lombardy,* that the Padri Olivetani bespoke another grand altar-piece for their church of Santa Vittoria al corpo.†

The subject, the Assumption of the Virgin, was but little consonant to the genius of the painter; but yet (says a learned and impartial critic) it was “Soggetto non solo egregio nella pittura, ma prestantissimo eziandio nella poesia” (one of great effect in pictures, and admirably adapted even for poetry).‡ The Padri Olivetani were so satisfied with their altar-piece, that they hung beside it one of Salvator’s great landscapes, which was pointed out to strangers by the Cicerone Monk as “a most marvellous production.”§

Earning much, accumulating little, but no longer harassed by the pressure of daily exigence, the tyrant of free spirits, (“la tiranna degli spiriti nobili,”) Salvator, in spite of every obstacle, had now advanced so far in personal consideration and professional fame, that he was enabled not only to raise, but to fix his own prices. This was the point he had so long laboured to attain; and from his estimate of the merits and value of his own works there was no longer any appeal. Unsusceptible of any sordid view, his firmness in this particular originated in an innate dignity of feeling, and a high sense of the respectability of the profession to which he did so much honour.|| “In this respect (says one of his biographers) the profession stands greatly his debtor; for he rigidly sustained the reputation of the art and his own, and by his firmness finally suc-

* Passeri.

† This church, though built so recently as 1624, no longer exists in Milan.

‡ Le finezze de’ pennelli Italiani.

§ Ibid.

|| A Roman noble endeavouring one day to drive a hard bargain with him, he coolly interrupted him to say, that, till the picture was finished, he himself did not know its value; observing, “I never bargain, Sir, with my pencil; for it knows not the value of its own labour before the work is finished. When the picture is done, I will let you know what it costs, and you may then take it or not as you please.”—“Signor, io non patteggio mai col mio pennello, perchè non può esso saper il valore del suo lavoro finchè terminato noi l’abbiamo. Quando sarà fatto, vi dirò ciò che costa; e starà à voi il prendere.”—*Pascoli*.

ceeded in obtaining a just appreciation of his glorious labours."*

Refusing all dictation on the subject of his pictures, he was wont to say, "Carpenters and joiners may work upon given plans, but genius never." The purchasers of his works were always the gainers by this hardy independence.†

Thus reserving the power of following the bent of his own genius, of reproducing himself in all the modifications of his masterly and extraordinary mind, and no less independent in his pecuniary than his professional relations, he resolutely emancipated himself from the domination of patronage; "and Heaven help *him* (says Baldinucci) who attempted to haggle with him!" A Roman prince, more notorious for his pretensions to *virtù* than for liberality to artists, sauntering one day in Salvator's gallery in the Via Babbuina, paused before one of his landscapes, and after a long contemplation of its merits exclaimed, "Salvator mio! I am strangely tempted to purchase this picture;—tell me at once the lowest price."

"Two hundred scudi," replied Salvator, carelessly.

"Two hundred scudi! *ohime!* that is a price!—but we'll talk of it another time."

The Illustrissimo took his leave; but, bent upon having the picture, he shortly returned, and again enquired "the lowest-price."

"Three hundred scudi!" was the sullen reply.

"Corpo di Bacco!" cried the astonished prince, "mi

* Carlo Rossi, who frequently paid more for one of Salvator's pictures than would have startled an Italian prince to think of, sometimes resisted the high prices which Rosa put on his works. On these occasions the painter would not abate a ducat; and Rossi withdrew without disputing the point, leaving a *champ libre* to more opulent chapmen. Rosa, having thus satisfied his self-esteem, and kept the picture for some time by him, most frequently sent it a present to Rossi, who durst not refuse it, lest he should lose a friend and a picture at the same time.

† "Jusqu'au choix de ses sujets (says a French critic) tout annonce l'originalité de son imagination. Ce sont toujours peu connus, et qui n'ont occupé le pinceau d'aucun de ses prédécesseurs. Aussi accordoit-il tant de supériorité aux peintres d'histoire, qu'il se faisoit et se croyoit humilié, lorsqu'on l'appeloit un admirable paysagiste." Everything, even to the choice of his subjects, announces the originality of his imagination. These are always little known, and untouched by his predecessors. Accordingly he attached so great a superiority to historical painting as to be angry, and count himself humiliated, when called an "admirable landscape-painter."

burla, vostra signoria, you are joking ! I see I must e'en wait upon your better humour ; and so *addio*, Signor Rosa."

The next day brought back the prince to the painter's gallery : who on entering, saluted Salvator with a jocose air, and added, " Well, Signor Amico, how goes the market to-day ? have prices risen or fallen ?"

" Four hundred scudi is the price to-day !" replied Salvator, with affected calmness ; when, suddenly giving way to his natural impetuosity, and no longer stifling his indignation, he burst forth,—“ The fact is, your Excellency would not now obtain this picture from me at any price ; and yet so little value do *I* put upon its merits, that I deem it worthy of no better fate than *this* ;” and snatching the panel on which it was painted from the wall, he flung it the ground, and with his foot broke it into an hundred pieces. “ His Excellency” made an unceremonious retreat, and returned no more to drive a hard bargain.

The story, as usual, circulated through Rome, to the disadvantage of the uncompromising artist ; and confirmed the character, which has still remained with him, of being “ un cervello indomito e feroce,” “ a hot-brained and desperate fellow.”

The princes of the family of Ghigi had been among the first of the aristocratic virtuosi of Rome to acknowledge the merits of Salvator, as their ancestors had been to appreciate the genius of Raphael.* Between the Prince Don Mario Ghigi (whose brother Pabio was raised to the pontifical throne by the name of Alexander VII.) and Salvator, there seems to have existed much personal intimacy ; and the prince's fondness for the painter's conversation was such, that during a long illness he induced Salvator to bring his easel to his bedside, and to work in his chamber at some small piece he was then painting for the prince.† It happened, that while Rosa was sketching and chatting by the prince's couch, one of the most fashionable physicians in

* When Raphael was engaged in painting the gallery of his friend Agostino Ghigi, he was so much in love with a beautiful Roman lady, that his passion interfered with his genius and his fame. Agostino persuaded the lady to pass her mornings in the gallery, and thus induced Raphael to continue his work.

† This is one of the very few instances recorded of Salvator's having worked in the presence of a second person.

Rome entered the apartment. He appears to have been one of those professional coxcombs, whose pretension, founded on unmerited vogue, throws a ridicule upon the gravest calling.

After some trite remarks upon the art, the doctor, either to flatter Salvator, or in imitation of the physician of the Cardinal Colonna, who asked for one of Raphael's finest pictures as a fee for saving the Cardinal's life,* requested Don Mario to give him a picture of Salvator as a remuneration for his attendance. The prince willingly agreed to the proposal; and the doctor, debating on the subject he should choose, turned to Salvator and begged "that he would not lay pencil to canvas until *he*, the Signor Dottore, should find leisure to dictate to him 'il pensiero e concetto della sua pittura,'" the idea and conceit of his picture! Salvator bowed a modest acquiescence, and went on with his sketch. The doctor, having gone the round of professional questions with his wonted pomposity, rose to write his prescription; when, as he sat before the table with eyes upturned, and pen suspended over paper, Salvator on tiptoe approached him, and drawing the pen gently through his fingers, with one of his old Coviello gesticulations in his character of the mountebank, he said "fermati, Dottor mio!—stop, doctor, you must not lay pen to paper till I have leisure to dictate the idea and conceit of the prescription I may think proper for the malady of his Excellency."

"Diavolo!" cried the amazed physician, "you dictate a prescription! why, *I* am the prince's physician, and not *you*!"

"And *I*, Caro," said Salvator, "am a painter, and not *you*. I leave it to the prince whether I could not prove myself a better physician than you a painter; and write a better prescription than you paint a picture."

The prince, much amused, decided in favour of the painter; Salvator coolly resumed his pencil, and the medical *cognoscente* permitted the idea of the picture to die away, "sul proprio letto."

This open warfare on arrogant pretension, waged with a

* This is the famous St. John of the Tribune, in the gallery of Florence. The physician was Messire Giacopo da Carpi. The picture afterwards fell into the hands of Francesco Benincedi, a Florentine merchant, who sold it to the Medici.

zeal more remarkable for its honesty and humour, than for its discretion, and that

“Sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world had stung,”*

enlisted among his enemies all who merited and all who feared his just and bitter animadversions.† “Some of the blockheads of the profession,” says Passeri, “were wont to say publicly that Salvator was evil tongued, and that none escaped him. But I, who long lived in habits of intimacy with him, even domesticated, may aver that I never knew a man so prodigal of praise to others, and truly to such a degree, that he frequently exceeded all bounds of commendation, and even lavished more praise than was strictly deserved. At the same time, it is certain, that in cases of sharp competition and of rivalry, when once he got the racket in his hand, he took the ball at the hop, and everybody perceived at whom it was directed; but it was aimed with such grace, that even he who was struck was amused. For the rest, he was always prone to lavish praise, wherever praise was truly merited.”‡ But while thus severe in his strictures on the arrogance of sturdy mediocrity, he was not less jealous of the rights of genius, and frequently expressed himself as if he thought none but superior minds should dare to decide upon the productions of superior minds. It is thus he is described as observing the common people of Rome, guided by their instincts, to give their mite of admiration to the master-works of the Pantheon; and as impatiently exclaiming, “What! can such as *they* detect the beauties of this work? Oh! did they but see it with Salvator’s eyes!”

The courage with which he attacked the degradation of the art by men who were bound to maintain its dignity,

* Lord Byron.

† To this indiscretion, and its effects on his fortunes, Salvator has made several strong allusions in his poetical works. In his fifth satire, “*La Babilonia*,” he observes:—

“L’aver sortito un volto austero e tetro
Dalla commune simpatia m’ha tolto;
Ed il libero parlar me tien indietro.”

“The austerity of my deportment has thrown me out of the pale of common sympathy, and the freedom of my speech keeps me in the shade.”

‡ Page 430.

furnished new reasons to the academy of St. Luke for not receiving him into their society; and "the reason they assigned for this cruel persecution," says Pascoli, "was that he had recently written some witty thing against them." It is supposed, however, that a practical, and not a written joke, had armed the academy at this particular epoch with new virulence against him.

A young surgeon, who had evinced some genius for painting, had been rejected by the dignified members of the Church and State academy, as being, by his profession, unworthy of belonging to their august body. The young dilettante was deeply and disproportionately mortified by this rejection; and he excited the compassion of Salvator, to whom he was known, both for his sufferings, and the weakness in which they originated. On the ensuing annual exhibition at the Pantheon, a picture of considerable merit was exposed with no name affixed to claim the applause which was lavished on it even by many of the academicians themselves.* The attention which Salvator seemed to fix on it, as he stood distinguished among the crowd, induced one of the members of St. Luke to ask him if he knew the painter?

"Oh! very well," replied Rosa carelessly: "it is painted by a certain young surgeon, who has been rejected by the puissant umpires of St. Luke, on account of his profession; a most impolitic rejection, *Signori miei*, for not only as you now seem to allow, would the talents of this young man as a painter have done honour to your society, but he would have been invaluable in his surgical capacity, as he would always have been at hand to give lessons on anatomy, in which the academicians are so deficient, and to reset the

* In some of the lives of Salvator it is said that this picture was painted by the surgeon himself; Pascoli asserts that it was painted for him by Salvator.

"Fece egli perciò un quadro, e lo diede a un suo amico più cirusico che pittore a mettere in mostra a San Giovanni Decollato, ove si trovò egli, pare, un tempo che il concorso alla festa era maggiore," &c. ("To this end, he executed a picture and gave it to his friend, who was more a surgeon than a painter, in order that it might appear at St. John's, at a time when the concourse there was the greatest, &c.")—*Pascoli*.

From the acknowledged excellence of the picture, this version is the most likely to be true; perhaps, however, the picture was only touched by Salvator.

unhappy limbs which they are in the daily habit of distorting."

Salvator, as usual, had the laughers on his side; but a murmur arose among all the painters present, which threatened to break forth into some overt acts; Salvator, however, extricated himself from the crowd, observing gaily to an acquaintance as he passed, "Il campo è rotto, che si può salvar, si salvi," the camp is broken up, *saute qui peut*.*

From this time the painters of Rome, and more especially the academicians, entered into an organized conspiracy against the character, fortunes, and fame of the imprudent satirist,† who in his poem upon painting has embodied those severe epigrams which he launched impromptu with such carelessness in his daily conversations. "In spite, however, of this malignity, (according to the testimony of one of his contemporary champions,) he continued to maintain himself in high repute as an excellent painter, by works which were esteemed in many parts of Europe, and which rendered his name celebrated and immortal."‡ The envy and vindictiveness which embittered his life had no other effect upon his genius, than to excite its powers to their highest capability.

* "Questo motto, non poco mordace, fu ben presto noto a tutti i pittori di Roma, quali gli si congiurarono contro." "This biting jest was soon known to all the painters in Rome, who conspired to revenge themselves of its author."—*Vita di S. Rosa*.

† So lively was the hatred he inspired, (says Baldinucci,) that he never afterwards could obtain any of the public works. "Vennesi a conservare sempre vivo un tal livore, che fece sì che adesso per ordinario non potesse mai venire fatto di essere impiegato nell'opere pubbliche."

‡ "Con l'opere di pittura seppe per altro mantenersi non ostante le maledicenze, in credito di eccellente pittore; e queste valavano ben presto in molte parti dell'Europa, e resero il suo nome sempre più chiaro ed immortale."

Salvator appears always to have had confidence in the candour of posterity, and in the power of truth, as he himself beautifully expressed it:—

" Noto è per tutto
Che suol l'odio, del vero essere il prezzo.
Della virtù maladicezza è frutto;
Ma col tempo alle Furie escon le chiome,
E s'accheta il livore orrendo e brutto
Le calunnie, una volta oppresse e dome,
Confesseran che cōn ragion gli emendi:
Che alfin la verità trova il suo nome."

La Pittura.

Professional criticism, in its shallow arrogance and technical jargon, went forth decrying his works as unworthy of public attention, asserting that his merit was confined to his cabinet pictures; that he never could produce an historical picture; that his great figures were out of drawing, his flesh tints wooden (*del legno*), his colours livid (*smorti*), his attitudes rude (*rusticani*), his draperies scanty, his ignorance of the naked figure striking, and his position of the head, *tutte dispettose*. * To all this cant of criticism of men whom his giant genius considered as pigmies, he replied by his "DEATH OF REGULUS!" and envy for a moment stood silent and abashed.

The story of Regulus, the horrible destiny of a virtuous man and a patriotic citizen, is one of those satires on human society which history unconsciously records, but which the genius of Salvator instinctively selected, as accordant with his own views and feelings. In contemplating such scenes, as they are faintly depicted in the page of the annalist, the spirits droop and the heart sickens at the wayward destinies of man; but in gazing on the splendid horrors of the Regulus of Salvator, the spectator revolts from the belief in such atrocities, and taking shelter in the classic scepticism of the age, † adds the death of this hero to the list of those "historic doubts," which the more scrutinizing logic of modern criticisms raises in the perusal of whatever approaches in its character to the marvellous. ‡

* "Dispettoso," scornful; an expression which well belonged to the heads of Salvator, and strongly characterized his own.

† Philosophie de l'Histoire, chap. 52.—*Voltaire*.

‡ The Death of Regulus, one of Rosa's grandest compositions, was painted for Carlo Rossi, who paid for it one hundred piastres. An hundred doubloons were immediately offered for a *replica* (duplicate), but in vain. All that could be obtained from the uncomplying artist, whose genius was beyond all sordid control, was a bold and spirited etching by the same master-hand that painted the subject. "Had I that subject now to paint," said Salvator, in a letter to Ricciardi, "I would not take less than four hundred doubloons!"

On the death of Carlo Rossi, his heirs, the Signori Valtore and Tarpenti sold and dispersed the greatest part of his pictures. The Regulus was purchased at an enormous price by the Colonna family. The mal-administration of the revenues of this once illustrious house, about the beginning of the last century, and more lately the greedy division of moveable property by litigious and contending heirs, (and not, as has been falsely supposed, the contributions levied by the French,) had caused the dispersion of the treasures of

Salvator now continued to paint "con valore e con calore," says Pascoli, "well and warmly," with industry and success. It appears to have been about this period that he executed his "St. Jerome in the desert" for Monsignor Costrigati, (the same, perhaps, which is now in the Brera at Milan,) several landscapes for the Abbate Castiglione, the Prince Sonning, Count Paolo Campione, Cardinal Altieri, (ed altri cavalieri) and other gentlemen; most of which have passed during the last century into England. These were followed by subjects more analogous to his philosophic genius; his Polycrates expiating his crimes, by that death to which he had doomed so many others; his Diogenes flinging away his cup on seeing a child drink from the hollow of his hand; his Democritus meditating among the tombs (one of the most sublime of his conceptions*); and his Pindar and Pan, or Satire dictating to Poetry, (one of his most characteristic, if not one of his best pictures.) This allegorical picture was painted expressly for his friend, Don Mario di Ghigi, and it is believed still to ornament the palace of his descendants at Rome.† What is most precious in it is the head of Pin-

the superb gallery Colonna. Of the twenty-six admired Salvators, mentioned in the Colonna catalogue of 1783, two only remained in the gallery in 1823, viz., his two Johns preaching in the wilderness. The vacant space, however, where the Regulus once hung, was still pointed out by the old Cicerone as a consecrated spot. The Regulus, together with Salvator's well-known "Pythagoras teaching his doctrines to the fishermen," were purchased by Lord Darnley at a large price from an Italian, who brought part of the *débris* of the Colonna and other Roman galleries to England. Of the etching, Salvator himself observes, in one of his letters to Ricciardi, "Per soddisfarvi circa a quel *pinxit* delle mie carte, ve l' ho messo per mia cortesia, e per far credere ch' io intanto l' ho intagliate in quanto l' avevo depinte; ma la verità è che dall' Attilio in poi, tra le grandi, e dal Democrito e Diogene della Scodella fra le mezzane, nessun' altra è stato da me colorita."—See the translation of the Letters in the Appendix.

* "Au milieu de tombeaux solitaires et ruinés, il a peint Démocrite environné d'ossemens d'hommes et d'animaux de toute espèce, confondus ensemble. Le philosophe les regarde avec un rire amer, et la tête appuyée sur sa main, il semble dire, 'Homme insensé! ne peut-on rire de tous vos grands projets, en voyant comment ils finissent!' "—*Taillasson*.

† In the terza stanza of the Palazzo Ghigi.—Vasi mentions this picture in his *Itinerario* by the title of Un Satiro che disputa con un Filosofo, da S. Rosa.—But I am given to understand, that doubts are entertained as to the picture in question being authentic.

dar, a portrait of the painter himself, who, as he listens to the dictation of the arch satyr, seems to repeat his own severe diatribes on the age and society in which he lived.*

CHAPTER VII.

1647—1657.

WHILE the life of Salvator Rosa, with its persecutions and its triumphs, was furnishing one more illustrative page to the general history of struggling genius, the death of Pope Urban VIII. in 1644 had added an article to the pontifical obituary. The "pious muse" of the Quirinal mourned the loss of her infallible poet; the arts themselves were not a little influenced by the death of a pontiff who was a Barberini; but the cavalier Bernini, who had become an heirloom of the pontificate, still kept his place near the chair of St. Peter; and had obtained from his *new* Holiness, Innocent X.† permission to erect the fountain in the Piazza Navona, and to superintend other public works of the same description.

While the banishment of the Barberini was among the secondary causes of the rapid degradation of the declining arts, now hastening to their goal—while Innocent X. was occupied in multiplying palaces,‡ striking gold and silver

* "Quando 'l pensier a contemplargl' io volgo,
Col gran numero lor fan ch' io trasecoli
Gl' asini del Senato e quei del volgo.
Sù le cronologie più non ispecolo,
Mi forza a dire il paragone, il saggio,
Che questo sia di Balaam il secolo."

La Musica.

† "Pamfili Innocent X., connu pour avoir chassé de Rome les deux neveux d'Urban VIII., auquel il devoit tout; pour avoir condamné les cinq propositions de Jansenius, sans avoir eu l'ennui de lire le livre; et pour avoir été gouverné par la Donna Olimpia, sa belle-sœur, qui vendit sous son pontificat tout ce qui pouvait se vendre."—*Voltaire.*

‡ Notwithstanding the murmurs of the Roman people (attacked alternately by famine and the plague) arose almost to insurrection, the Pope continued to waste vast sums of money in raising, or *finishing* churches and palaces. Among these were the Lateran, the Vatican, and the palace of the

medals in honour of himself and his protectress the Virgin, or in mediating between the contending ambassadors of France and Spain (in whose contests their cooks and coachmen bore an armed part, and lives were almost daily lost for a point of precedence and etiquette),—he was suddenly called on to mingle in events which shook his own throne, by endangering those with whose interests the bestower of the divine right of kings is inseparably connected.

The baseless war between France and Spain, undertaken in the year 1635, merely because "*le Cardinal de Richelieu l'avait voulu*," or because a bad minister desired to maintain his precarious place, was still desolating or occupying all Europe, and sacrificing millions to the sordid or ambitious views of one individual, when a contest of a far different nature and tendency broke forth. War had hitherto been the pastime of princes, a struggle for power and sway between king and king; but the war which was kindled towards the middle of the seventeenth century, in the most civilized countries of Europe, was a war of nations against their governments, of freedom against power; and the sudden and general impulsion resembles that crisis in the physical temperament by which Nature exerts all her energies to throw off some long latent and destructive malady, which it is no longer able passively to sustain.

England, Holland, France, and Italy, were alike roused to resistance by the long, and, at length, the intolerable pressure of bad government,—of despotism drawn to its extremest tension, whose exactions, leaving the people nothing to expend but their blood, urged them at length to shed that blood in their own cause. The responsible chiefs of this system of misrule were the princes of the houses of Stuart, Austria, and Bourbon, names which eternally belong to that record in which Liberty has registered the deadliest of her foes. But the impelling agents were the bad men, who, under the name of Ministers, stood between these potentates and the people they governed—the Straffords, the Lauds, the Alvas, the Richelieus, the Mazarins, and the Arcoses.

Whatever variety of aspect civil warfare assumed at this Campidoglio, besides a number of fountains, and the College de Propagandà Fide, from whence young missionaries are dispatched to all parts of the world to propagate the faith. It was built on the plans of Bernini.

period,—whether she moved forward steadily to the goal of redress with a solemn pace and a “sad-coloured suit,” with the gloomy religious reformers of England,—or, led by love and cabal, pranked it in silken scarf and flaunting plume, and took cities “pour la belle des belles” with the gay Frondeurs of France,—still the cause and object of resistance were the same:—unjust and overwhelming taxes, levied to carry on profitless and inglorious wars abroad, and to support the luxury and extravagance of a few worthless men at home.*

Innocent X., who had made the cause of the Stuarts his own, had scarcely despatched Monsieur Rimuccini to Ireland, to protect Catholicism in her last hold in the British dominions with arms and ships, when the same causes which had urged on revolution in distant realms, brought it home almost to the gates of Rome.† The long-suffering slaves of Sicily and Naples broke their chains in the face of their tyrant, and in contempt of the Inquisition, which, with all their degradation, they never suffered to establish itself within the walls of their capitals.

In the year 1647, the kingdom of Naples exhibited a spectacle of rapacity and misrule in the government, and of misery in the people, which even unhappy Ireland, in her worst days, has, perhaps, never surpassed. Besides the ordinary causes of wretchedness which operated under the

* “Les guerres civiles commencèrent à Paris, comme elles avaient commencé à Londres, pour un peu d’argent.” This is the remark of Voltaire, who has written history in a series of epigrams; but the “peu d’argent” exacted by Mazarin and his vile agent Emeri, to support the idle war against Spain and Austria, and to supply the festivities of the Palais Royal, like the ship-money in England, was the last drop which caused the overflowing of a cup filled to the brim with bitterness. The people and the parliament began the civil wars of France; the aristocracy, the De Retzes, the Rochefoucaults, the Longuevilles, &c., only joined in them for their own selfish and ambitious views; and their vanity and intrigues gave a ridicule to the Fronde, which its glorious cause has never effaced.

† There is something amusing in the frank avowal of the prosing continuator of Platina, the *Proser*-laureate of Popes,—that Innocent X. paused for a moment to think what he could make by the Neapolitan Revolution, and whether its commotions would not permit him to extend his own jurisdiction over Naples by aiding the rebels. Over-persuaded, however, by his nephews, he lent his assistance to the Spaniards to crush the Neapolitans; sent thirty thousand doubloons to the Viceroy, and permitted him to levy troops in the ecclesiastical states; thus arming Italians against Italians in the cause of despotism.—See *Vite de’ Pontifici*, p. 861.

Austro-Spanish dynasty, Naples was now exhausted by the annual levies of troops, which it was obliged to supply, to carry on the fruitless war in which the house of Hapsburg had been engaged. The ordinary revenue of the kingdom had been raised from 500,000 crowns to 9,000,000 livres; besides which, Charles V., in forty-three years, received ten donatives of three millions each; Philip II., who reigned forty years, received twenty-two extraordinary donatives of the like sum; under Philip III. and IV., up to 1646, the extraordinary taxes amounted to 300,000,000. But this was little when compared to the gabelles, the favourite tax of tyrants, which alone amounted to 33,000,000 per annum. These gabelles fell upon every article of consumption, and they had reduced the people to the lowest extreme of misery. Fruits alone had hitherto been exempted, and the lower orders of Naples, denied all other sustenance but what they snatched from the prodigal bounty of their delicious climate, were reduced to subsist on this abundant, but not very nutritive class of edibles.

There is a state of public feeling, that, though veiled in the silence of brooding reserve, contains a mine of resistance, which the faintest spark may kindle into unextinguishable explosion. In this state were the people of Naples, when the Duke d'Arcos, the viceroy of the kingdom, and one of the most rapacious governors whom distant despotism ever intrusted with its unlimited power, laid an impost on all fruits coming into the capital, calculated to produce an increase of revenue of seventy millions per annum. The government thus became the instigator of one of the most singular revolutions to which the pressure of extreme misery ever incited a spirit-broken and enduring people.

Every three years the treasures extorted from the kingdom of Naples by the grand visitor, an officer appointed for this purpose, were shipped on board the royal navy and transmitted to Spain. At the period immediately preceding the insurrection, the admiral's ship lay at anchor in the bay, freighted with some millions of treasure thus obtained, and destined, as usual, to supply the wasteful extravagance of the Spanish administration. This ship, with its precious cargo, was burnt; and the fire was attributed to the discontented nobles, who were suspected of having joined the

people in effecting this daring outrage. The Viceroy imprisoned the two Princes Caraffa, and promised the abolition of the offensive tax; but, too weak to punish, too sordid to redress, he trifled with the confidence of the lower classes, and insulted the nobles.

In the summer of 1647, when the public fermentation was beginning unequivocally to declare itself, the approaching celebration of the great national and religious festival of Our Lady of Carmel appeared, for the moment, to obliterate all less joyous impressions. The principal spectacle of this *gran festa* was a sort of war-game, played by the youths of the city. A Turkish fortress was erected in the centre of the Mercato del Carmine.* The crescent glittered on its ramparts, and it was defended by three or four hundred youths, who, with the name of Alarbes, were supposed to represent a species of Turkish militia. The besiegers of this stronghold of infidelity, the representatives of the Neapolitan nation, never failed to conquer the Alarbes; as the people never failed to rejoice in a victory which imagined the triumph of the cross over the crescent,—of the Neapolitans over their hated neighbours, the Turks!

The chiefs elected to command these opposed forces were, Scipione Gannatajo Pione, a bold brave youth of eighteen, who led on the Turks, and Tommaso Angelo Maya, the captain of the Neapolitans, whose familiar and abbreviated appellation of Masaniello, now belongs to history. On the morning of the seventh of July, the two commanders came to review their forces in the market, previously to the celebration of the festa. They were all habited alike in the customary Neapolitan suit of coarse linen trowsers and tunic, fastened with as coarse a girdle, and without stockings; their arms were long canes or reeds, to which a pitched

* Il Mercato del Carmine had, time immemorial, been the scene of all popular commotions, as it was of many historical events. It opens to the sea, and is flanked by the church, convent, and tower of the Carmelites. There, under the viceroys, all executions took place; and a perpetual scaffold was erected opposite a narrow street, called Del Sospiro, as it was thence the criminal first caught a view of the place of death.

On this spot, the young and princely Conrad was beheaded in 1268; here Masaniello carried on his singular revolution, and here his successor, the gallant and unfortunate Duc de Guise, intrenched himself in the Torrione del Carmine, which, after his defeat, was converted into a fortress with the name of Castello del Carmine.

faggot was attached for burning the citadel at the hour of attack. Every eye was turned on Masaniello as he marched into the Mercato; for his election was a preconcerted event, and he had long been looked on as one who represented, in his story and condition, the sufferings and the grievances of the people at large. Masaniello was a handsome youth, of a lofty stature* and prepossessing air, acute, vivacious, endowed with an instinctive love of justice and hatred of oppression, and with a simple but powerful eloquence, the language of strong feelings and clear intellects. Though his profession was no higher than that of a fisherman, carrying on a little commerce between Amalfi (his native village in the gulf of Salerno) and the market of Naples, yet he is said to have taken a pride in an employment which the founder of his church, and the favourite apostle of his Redeemer, had rendered sacred; and at an early age he obtained an extraordinary influence over his companions.†

Masaniello, though he had married in boyhood, and was already a father, had by prudence and industry contrived to save a small sum of money, and to support his little family with respectability for one so humble, when his young wife, who attended the markets with grain and fruits, endeavouring to pass the barriers without paying the toll, was seized and thrown into prison, and a fine of an hundred ducats levied on her husband. Plunged into the deepest indigence by an exaction which exhausted the savings of his laborious life, the hatred of the beggared fisherman of Amalfi against the

* History describes Masaniello as being particularly well-looking; many of his portraits are evidently caricatures painted to please the party-spirit of the day.

† The Neapolitan revolution appeared so terrible in the eyes of the reigning governments of Italy, that infinite pains were taken to misrepresent and discolour its incidents. The first printed account of it issued from the government press of Naples. It was copied into a periodical journal of Parma, and was got up as a warning to all people who deemed themselves entitled to meddle with taxes, imposed at the will of their rulers. Bussi Rabutin, a man "of wit and pleasure about town," in the days of Louis XIV., threw a ridicule upon an insurrection made by the *canaille*, by some ludicrous incidents he attached to it; and even Tom D'Urfey, to please the Stuarts, got up a tragedy called *Masaniello*, intended as a slur on the recent commotions in England.

The following account is drawn from the least partial statements, and from some traditionary tales of the Neapolitans themselves, who still hold the memory of Masaniello in veneration.

tyranny of the underlings in office, became deep as the wretchedness into which they had plunged him. From effects so personal, his sullen and discontented spirit extended its broodings to the causes in which they originated; and in this mood he was found in the hut, which now (in the place of the vine-covered cottage he had been forced to abandon) afforded him a temporary shelter; and he was elected captain of the Neapolitan Lazzaroni, to fight for the honour of Christ and Our Lady of Carmel.

Masaniello and Pione had severally taken the field at an early hour of the morning, and begun their ordinary evolutions in the Mercato, when a dispute arose between the gardeners of Pozzuoli, their customers, and the officers of the new *gabelle* on fruits. The peasantry and the citizens alike refused to pay a tax which the Viceroy had solemnly promised to abolish from the 30th of the preceding month. The officers insisted, and the conflict became general and fearful. The gardeners flung their fruits on the earth, declaring they would rather give them to the people, than permit them to be seized by their common bloodsuckers. The general of the police attempted to interfere, by order of the Viceroy, and the tumult became still more violent, when Masaniello, springing on the steps of the church, commanded silence; and with the air and voice of one inspired, exclaimed, "My people, from this moment there is no *gabelle* in Naples!" He was answered by the approving acclamations of thousands. His own little troop, and that of Pione, rallied round their leaders, and were joined by some others. This force he divided into two corps, and placing himself at their head, he marched forth amidst the plaudits of all Naples, to the Viceroy's palace, to demand a religious performance of the promise so often reiterated and so often broken. The shrewd and clever Duc D'Arcos, the profound diplomatist and master of that "*fourberie que l'on appelle politique*,"* thus taken on the hip, was confounded and intimidated. He sent away his family to the citadel of the Castello-Nuovo; he doubled his German guards, surrounded himself with his court, and trembled as he presented himself at the open balcony, beneath which the young fisherman of Amalfi, at the head of his boy-

* Knavery, which is called politics.

bands, armed only with reeds, called for a parley with the representative of majesty.

The Viceroy again promised the abolition of the *gabelle* upon fruit; but when the multitude cried out, "upon flour also," he replied, with a show of returning firmness, "that he might *moderate*, but could not abolish, any *gabelle* save that on fruit." It was then, that, after a moment's pause, Masaniello ordered his troop to follow him; and rushing through the gates of the palace, forced the foreign troops to fly before him. Traversing the sumptuous apartments, he commanded that all the splendid trappings of luxury, which were there accumulated at the expense of the people's blood, should be destroyed, without reserving a single object save the king's picture, which he said was "the image of a constituted authority, betrayed and abused by its worthless and rapacious ministers." To this he bowed reverentially, and this alone was saved from the common wreck.

The Viceroy and his Court, having escaped by secret passages, fled to the Convent of the Minims, and thence found means of retiring to the fortified citadel of St. Elmo. Through the mediation of the popular Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Filomarino, he condescended, from amidst his German and Spanish guards, to negotiate with Masaniello, promising to sign a paper, by which he bound himself to abolish the imposts upon victuals, and secretly offering an enormous pension to Masaniello, to engage him to abandon the people, or to betray them!

"I pray your Eminence to tell the Viceroy," said Masaniello with disdain, "that he alone can reduce the people to order, by the fulfilment of his promise. Let him abolish the *gabelles*, and he will find their lives and means devoted to the king, and their obedience secured to his own authority." The Cardinal is said to have remarked, that the air and manner of Masaniello exhibited all the elevation and firmness of a soul which belongs to the highest order of character.

On the receipt of this proposition, the Viceroy shut himself up in St. Elmo, and thus formally abandoned the city to a low-born youth of three-and-twenty, who in the space of a few hours beheld himself its absolute master, without having incurred the reproach of shedding one drop of blood.

The first acts of his authority were to disarm the foreign guards, to open the state prison of St. Giacomo, where hundreds of persons were incarcerated for the non-payment of taxes, which they had not the means to discharge, and to proclaim by sound of trumpet the abolition of the *gabelles* on all articles of subsistence. The people of all classes returned the most rapturous applauses to the blast of that war-trump (for the first time sounding to the rally of hope and of prosperity), which relieved them from the urgent approaches of famine, and restored them to that abundance which Nature had provided in the most fertile region of her creation.

The imposts abolished, the *bureaux* in which they had been collected became useless, or served only as monuments of former degradation, and precedents and engines for future grievances. Masaniello ordered them to be destroyed, together with all the registers, accounts, and audits they contained; commanding at the same time that the ill-gotten treasures of the harpies who presided over them, and whose enormous wealth was raised on the ruin of the people, should be consumed; that nothing should be reserved but works of art*—nothing saved but the lives of the worthless owners.

This most singular order, and the manner in which it was executed, forms a striking feature in the history of popular insurrections. Jewels, gems, gold and silver ornaments, specie, the richest tapestry, and the most costly furniture, piled together in gorgeous heaps before the doors of the financial palaces, were fired by the faggots intended for the service of Our Lady of Carmel, and were consumed to ashes in the presence of thousands, who looked coldly on, and (in obedience to the law of their chief, on whom they had bestowed the title of CAPTAIN OF THE PEOPLE,) refrained from touching a single valuable. Not a gem was secreted, not a sequin purloined, not a house entered, save such houses as had been marked as belonging to the officers of the *gabelles*. Not the hair of one Neapolitan head was

* Masaniello sent all the pictures to the Convents, except the portraits of the King;—these he caused to be hung under canopies at the corners of the streets, to remind the people that they were not rebels, but fighting only against the mal-administration of the King's servants. The popular cry was "Long live the King, and death to the bad government!"

injured—not one drop of blood, even of their foreign soldiery, was shed. The people, restored to the full enjoyment of the riches of their fertile soil, beheld, not with eyes of covetousness, but with feelings of contempt, those treasures which had tempted man to crush his brother man to the earth.

The character of Masaniello, as it developed itself under the pressure of novel and extraordinary circumstances, seemed to display almost superhuman qualities and capabilities. He scarcely took any food, slept but little, was in perpetual activity. At once mild and resolute, severe and just, he remodelled the police, and directed its operations with absolute authority and with admirable intelligence. He erected batteries on the most exposed points, threw artillery into suspicious situations, invested the Convent of San Lorenzo, the repository of the arms and archives of the city, and took it almost without resistance, although the government had stationed a party of Calabrian banditti in the belfry to defend it. He restrained the people from all acts of violence, protected the nobility, and administered justice with inflexible impartiality. As unambitious as disinterested, he was solely occupied with the great object of restoring the people to their ancient franchises, and forcing the Viceroy to a formal renunciation of the *gabelles*. While the high-born Duc D'Arcos shut himself up in the Castello-Nuovo, to which he had fled from St. Elmo, as being nearer the sea—while he affected to negotiate, in order to gain time, and *betray* the man he could not *conquer*,—Masaniello, in his fisherman's habit, stood unarmed at the open casement of his own humble dwelling, giving orders with an authority none disputed, and with a judgment from which none appealed; and thus strengthened his empire over public opinion by the display of all those qualities which tend most powerfully to win its suffrages.

Thus occupied during the day, he was wont at night to hold council with his most trusted friends, and to add, on the exigence of the occasion, new clauses to that short but efficient code, which common sense, strong sympathy, and intuitive knowledge, had dictated; a code into which no quibble or sophistry gained admittance, and which no theoretical abstractions rendered unintelligible. Sometimes he

"gave his little senate laws," under the roof of his own lowly dwelling; sometimes escaping from the narrow confines of his hovel, and the sultry atmosphere of the noisy Mercato, he ascended the monastic keep, the now celebrated Torrione del Carmine, a dark and solitary tower, adjoining the convent, devoted by the monks to mysterious purposes of religious punishment, but now converted by Masaniello into a stronghold.

In this singular watch-tower, which commanded the bay, the Castello-Uovo, the Castello-Nuovo, and all the fortresses of the Viceroy, Masaniello at midnight sat in close but not secret council. The torches stuck against its rugged walls must have thrown their red and dusky light upon many a form and visage which romance would delight to conjure to its ideal scenes, and which painting seizes with rapture for its force of expression and strong effect of *chiaro oscuro*. In the midst of these graphic groups appeared one, who looked on them, not only with a poet's, but a painter's eye; one, on whom not a form, a tint, a light, a shadow, was lost; who sketched while he counselled, and studied while he listened; whose versatile genius seized the moral and the material aspect of the objects which surrounded him; and whose pen and pencil would alike have given Masaniello to posterity, had not the extraordinary destiny of the Captain-general of the Neapolitan people made for him a distinguished place in the history of the world:—this man was Salvator Rosa.*

The transition from the tranquil studio of the Babbuina, from the splendid saloons of the Ghigi and the Rossi, to the perilous and dusky councils of Masaniello in the Torrione del Carmine, was strange and striking, but not out of keeping with the principles and modes of action of him who deemed liberty worthy of purchase at any price, and who felt existence only through strong excitements and powerful sensations.

He, who some years before had bidden a bitter and, as

* "Le génie s'étend et se reserre sur tout ce qui nous environne." Several sketches of Masaniello, and of his most noted associates, were made by Salvator Rosa, by torch light; they are to be found among his etchings. Cardinal Fesch shewed the author a full-length painting of Masaniello, attributed to Salvator, in his palace at Rome, and the amiable Archbishop of Tarentum shewed her portraits of Masaniello and his wife by the same hand.

he believed, a last adieu to that country, which, though his native land, was associated in his mind with remembrances the most painful and with feelings the most mortifying, now came to its succour, on catching its first free aspirations, and brought to its cause his personal devotion, his time, life, fortune, and powerful genius: for true patriotism, like true love, readily forgives the error and the coldness which is followed by repentance and reformation.*

Salvator was the courted of the courted, equally distinguished by the envy of rivals and the homage of friends; and he was receiving orders from all parts of Europe, when reports reached Rome of the approaching revolutions of Sicily and Naples,—of the murmurs and discontents both of the people and of a large portion of the nobility. He instantly shut up his house† and set off for Naples, where he was received with distinction, not only by the public, but by the members of that profession from which he had hitherto only experienced persecution and calumny. The school of Spagnuolo (who was himself sinking in years and in iniquities) was passing away, or rather it was succeeded by that of Aniello Falcone, Spagnuolo's most celebrated pupil, and the friend of Salvator. The pupils of Falcone had adopted the political tenets of their master.

* Passeri and Baldinucci pass over this most important and singular event in Salvator's life. Being *church and state men*, and living in due fear of the Inquisition, they probably thought they best served the memory of their friend by this silence. Tradition and more modern biographers were less timid, and have preserved an incident which strongly illustrates the character of one, who believed that Heaven itself guided him, when his vocation was the liberty of his native land.

“Per tutto è Dio, ne può mancar sollievo
A chi la libertade ha per Arturo.”—*La Babilonia*.

† Pascoli, who wrote his “Lives” some twenty or thirty years after Salvator's death, mentions this visit to Naples with due reserve, and avoids all political allusion. “Having become rich, he (Salvator) began to ruminate a journey once more, to show himself under the influence of his better fortunes,—a vanity common to all, who, born in poverty, seek to return to their *nest* in their changed state to play the great man.” (“Egli pareva già d'esser riccone, quando ruminava di ritornarsi di bel nuovo a farsi vedere a migliore fortuna alla patria; vanità quasi commune ad ognuno che nato sia poverello, il tornare cangiando stato nel suo *nido* a far da signore.”) Salvator, however, chose a singular moment, “per far da signore;” for he arrived in Naples in the last days of 1646, just as the Viceroy had laid the impost on fruit, which had thrown all Naples into fermentation.

They were young men of ardent spirits and factious dispositions, and they had occasionally appeared in open hostility to the foreign troops* which then garrisoned Naples; and which, though comparatively a small force, exercised every sort of violence against the unhappy Neapolitans. In a broil between a party of these troops and the pupils of Falcone, at some public festival, a near kinsman and favourite pupil of the painter had been murdered by a soldier in open day. The murderer was concealed, or protected by the government; and the friends and partisans of the murdered man finding that no justice existed for them, took the law into their own hands, and committed the punishment of this atrocious crime to private vengeance.

At the moment, when the long-smothered discontents of Sicily and Naples were on the point of exploding, the school of Aniello, with a numerous addition of their kindred, friends, and companions, formed themselves into a band, which, in allusion to the melancholy event that originated their association, was called "*La Compagnia della Morte*"—"the fraternity of death." Their object was the destruction of the foreign soldiers: their chosen captain was Falcone; and Salvatore Rosa on his arrival in Naples was enrolled in their corps, and regarded as its most distinguished member.

On the first breaking out of the revolution of 1647, *La Compagnia della Morte* offered its services to Masaniello, who, it may be supposed, accepted of their alliance with transport;† and it is historically recorded of Salvatore, that he was "*uno dei soldati più fidi di Masaniello*," one

* German and Spanish.

† As the only accounts of this revolution allowed to be printed in Italy were favourable to the Government, the *Banda della Morte* are always briefly described as making "*oribili stragi*," horrible carnage. During the reign of Masaniello no massacres of any kind occurred, except that of the bandits who fell victims of their own treason in the church of the Carmelites. Masaniello, however, twice beat the regular troops in pitched battles; and if the band of Falcone (consisting of young men, artists, &c.) were enabled without regular arms or discipline to master the veteran troops and occasion a carnage among them (the only opportunity offered for giving grounds for the statements in question), there is nothing in the circumstance discreditable to their character. All the dictionaries of painters, however, repeat the "*oribili stragi*" committed by Falcone's school with becoming and loyal emphasis.

of Masaniello's best soldiers. Hitherto this bloodless revolution had been effected without the loss of a single life. But while Masaniello was endeavouring to preserve the tranquillity of the city, and to negotiate for the formal abolition of the imposts, the Viceroy in his fortress was laying plans for a civil war, by fomenting disputes between the aristocracy and the people, and by drawing towards Naples the troops stationed at out-quarters. He erected barricadoes round the royal palace to preserve a communication with the Castello-Nuovo; placed foreign guards at all the avenues; released the Duca di Matalona (one of the Caraffi) from prison, to induce him to intrigue with the people for the destruction of Masaniello, by a promise of pardon for all past offences, and of honours beyond his utmost ambition: in a word, the Viceroy had recourse to all those means which mark the crooked and fraudulent policy of feeble but despotic diplomacy.* It has ever been the crime, or the folly, of governments, to apply their remedies to what is accidental in great public commotions; and, in their apprehension of the sudden development of physical force which accompanies them, to overlook the deeper moral causes which have prepared their explosion. Regarding public abuses as private (or, in the modern phrase, as *vested*) rights, and secretly determined to uphold them at all costs, their objects is ever to suppress, and not to remove, popular discontents.† The hour of resistance, they urge, is not that of concession; and, resistance once controlled, its causes are immediately neglected and forgotten. Such governments, therefore, when powerful, punish with severity; when timid or feeble, they intrigue, undermine, deceive, and throw aside every consideration of truth, justice, public dignity, and private respectability.

* The Viceroy having promised the people a charter, granted them by Charles V. to place it at their own disposition, he twice attempted to deceive them by a paltry forgery. The Duca di Matalona, the bearer of the first of these false documents, which was at once detected, was dragged from his house and thrown into prison; and from that moment the people and the nobility separated, and the failure of the revolution was secured.

† In no country has this policy been more perversely and perseveringly pursued than in Ireland. The open purchase by the Government of the *rights* of the aristocracy, in their rotten boroughs, as of a private property, which took place at the Union, shews to demonstration the *object*, and the whole history of Ireland declares the *means*, of its proconsular régime.

To eradicate the evil (the short sure cut to public tranquillity) is, in their estimate, to betray the ruling castes; and even when it escapes not their apprehension, nor exceeds their power, it is the last desperate measure to which they give a reluctant consent. To crush and to betray, are the sole schemes of domination, to which the legislators of abuse are accustomed voluntarily to resort.

Hitherto the simple wisdom of Masaniello, and the unanimity of the people, had defeated this tortuous and detestable policy; the troops marching upon Naples were met by him and his irregular forces, and taken prisoners. When brought triumphantly to Naples, and treated by Masaniello's orders with kindness, the Germans availed themselves to such an extent of his hospitality, that, in a state of intoxication, they ran through every quarter of the city, shouting "Viva il popolo! Viva Masaniello!"

The investment of San Lorenzo, the defeat of a division of German and Spanish troops near Torre del Greco, the pertinacity of Masaniello, who, at the head of 150,000 men, steadily demanded the abolition of the *gabelle*, and the restoration of the charters of Ferdinand of Arragon and Charles V., convinced the Viceroy that the measures, as yet attempted, were unavailing; and he resolved to accomplish that by crime, which could not be effected by fraud or force. The actors in this tragedy were a troop of banditti in the service of the Government; the scene, the church of the Carmelites; and the time, the moment when the Cardinal Filomarino was to occupy the attention of the people by reading to them (*from the altar too*) a treaty of peace, by which the Viceroy once more pledged himself to abolish the *gabelle*, and to restore the royal charter. All Naples abandoned itself to confidence and joy; the market-place, the church, the convent, were crowded to excess; but among the people it was observed, that there mingled men whose dark and unknown faces and mysterious carriage excited suspicion. Among these Masaniello recognized Antonio Grosso, a well-known captain of banditti, and some of his terrific band; but Perrone, a man of low character, but much talent, who, acting as a spy for the Government, had gained a great ascendancy over Masaniello, restored confidence by frankly avowing that some outlaws from the Abruzzi had entered the town to witness the spectacle, and

share the triumphs of a cause which they had warmly espoused. Confidence thus restored, Masaniello was proceeding carelessly towards the church, when a single shot from an arquebuss whistled by him in the cloisters, and he had scarcely pronounced the word "traitors," when a discharge of fire-arms, mingled with the shrieks of thousands, echoed through the vast edifice. The cry of "Masaniello is assassinated,—down with the banditti," repeated through the church, was heard in the market-place. The multitude rushed in to the assistance of their chief; the assassins were driven out and forced to fly; some few were poniarded on the steps of the altar; others were struck down in the cloisters, and all was confusion and sanguinary contest, when Masaniello himself arrested the carnage by his voice and presence. Not a shot had reached his person—the people deemed him invulnerable, and cried, "Al miracolo! Viva Masaniello! Viva nostra Signora del Carmine!" A hundred and fifty banditti are said to have fallen victims to the popular rage; one of them, and that one was Antonio Grosso himself, before he died, confessed to a priest, that the conspirators against the life of Masaniello were the Duca di Matalona, his brother Don Peppo Caraffa, Perrone, and the Viceroy, by whom the others were employed. Thus the first blood that stained this revolution, flowed in consequence of the intrigues and treachery of that Government, whose tyranny and extortion had forced on the experiment of reform.

The people now had lost all confidence in the court and aristocracy; and even Masaniello, hitherto so mild and so confiding, became suspicious and melancholy. He saw that his life was attacked by the Government, and that the loss of all he had won for the people would be the consequence of its extinction. At length, however, a treaty was concluded between the Viceroy and the people, in which the former had the dexterity to insert a clause, rendering the whole transaction nugatory. The fraud was not immediately perceived, and a perfect reconciliation between the Government and the insurgents took place.

On a special invitation from the Viceroy, Masaniello gave a reluctant consent to visit him in the Castello-Nuovo. It was not till the Cardinal had suggested the necessity for a frank and open reconciliation, and of setting the example

of confidence, that the unambitious Captain-general agreed to the meeting. When the Cardinal and officers of state came to conduct Masaniello to the Castle, he was still in his white linen jacket and fisherman's cap; and to all remonstrances on the unfitness of his garb for the occasion, he replied, that "it was the dress of his class and profession, the dress in which he had fought for the rights and privileges of the people, and the only dress which he should ever wear with pride, or look upon with triumph." At length, however, a threat from the Cardinal, of excommunication, forced him to yield: and when he again appeared before the people, he was mounted on a superb charger, dressed in a rich habit of white and silver, his velvet hat shaded with a profusion of feathers, and his air that of a graceful and handsome cavalier. The people could not satiate themselves with gazing on him; and when the procession began to move to the Castello-Nuovo, he was followed by sixteen companies of cavalry and infantry, well armed and accoutred, and by 50,000 of the Neapolitan population. The Cardinal rode beside him in grand pontificals; and the officers of state went before in the Viceroy's carriages. At the gates of the Castle the captain of the guards welcomed him with military honours; and in the Viceroy's name invited him to alight and enter.

Masaniello for a moment paused, and threw an anxious eye, from the formidable portals he was about to pass, to the devoted multitude who followed him: then springing with dexterity from the saddle upon the back of the noble animal he rode, so as to be seen by all, he drew the charter from his bosom, and holding it up to the people, addressed them with his usual energy. He commanded them never to lay down their arms till the charter of their liberties was signed by the King of Spain and his ministers. He entreated them to believe that the public good had been the sole object of his exertions, and that it alone should be his recompense. He said, that he blushed to appear before them in such gaudy trappings, but that, in assuming them for the moment, he obeyed the Viceroy and Mother Church: but he added with a melancholy pleasantry, "As soon as the nets I have cast shall bring that liberty to shore, for which I have so long fished in troubled waters, you shall behold me in my old garb and calling, demanding of *you*, my

people, nothing, save that at my last hour, you will each and all say an Ave Maria for my soul's peace." Tears and acclamations followed this appeal; and moved by the emotion of the people, he was about to withdraw, when, turning back with lingering anxiety, he reminded them that in all they had done, they had acted not less for the sovereign's interest than their own. "For me," he added, "I am about to trust myself confidently into the hands of the King's representative. Yet ere I go, I pray his Eminence, the Cardinal, to give us all the benefit of his holy benediction." The Cardinal advanced, and waved his hands over the heads of kneeling thousands; and in the midst of this simple but imposing ceremony, Masaniello entered the gates of him who had so recently plotted his murder.

He had not, however, long disappeared, when the people began to suspect some new treachery: and their breathless silence was followed by low mutterings, which broke forth into tumultuous cries. They called for Masaniello, and after a little time he appeared at a balcony between the Viceroy and the Cardinal. His simple exclamation of "I am here, my people," accompanied by the pressure of his fore-finger on his lip, stilled the uproar, and the silence of the tomb prevailed in the Largo di Castello.

Masaniello turned to the Viceroy and said, "Behold, how easily the people *may* be governed." He then dismissed the multitude, assuring them all was well, and enjoining them to retire peaceably to their houses. The sixteen companies filed off in military order, and the multitude followed in silent obedience.—A conference followed; Masaniello was confirmed in his post of captain-general of the people by the Government, and was reconducted in state to his hovel in the Mercato, by the equipages and principal officers of the Viceroy's court.*

But his mission was nevertheless now hastening to its close! On the 13th of July, he accepted an invitation to a fête, at which some of the court were to be present, at Paulippo. The party proceeded by water; and in the course of this splendid little voyage, Masaniello, exhausted by the fatigues of the day, called for iced water, which was pre-

* "Le Viceroi n'osoit s'opposer ni aux actions ni aux entreprises de Masaniello: il trembloit à son seul nom."—*Histoire de la Révolution de Naples.*

sented to him by Onofrio Caffriero, one of the Viceroy's officials and familiars. Whether he really was poisoned in this draught, as was generally asserted, is uncertain. Extraordinary exertions, long want of sleep, and an overworked brain, are causes of mental derangement, which have affected wiser men than the fisherman of Amalfi; and under such circumstances of excitement, a glass of iced water might in itself become deleterious: but, on the other hand, the administration of a poisonous drug was no improbable project for the Viceroy,* and men of his stamp, with whom a political end sanctions every crime, deserve to bear the full weight of that odium, which the eager credulity and instinctive dread of the multitude seldom fail to attach to such governors, where there is room for coupling a secret villainy with their known interests and wishes.† But however this may have been, marks of insanity manifested themselves immediately after the voyage; his acts of justice became tinctured by a merciless severity; and his most ordinary actions were suddenly distinguished by wildness and incoherency. It was determined by the representatives of the people to send a deputation to the Viceroy, offering a return to obedience, provided the terms of capitulation were observed; and to depose Masaniello from his high office, and place him in confinement, surrounded by all the comforts of which his unhappy situation was susceptible. But the Viceroy had already resolved on a more summary procedure. On the night before the festival of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Masaniello had become so outrageous, that he had been taken and bound; and this act of violence having restored him to his senses, he was permitted on the following day to attend divine service in the Chiesa del Carmine. He presented himself to the people with an air of sadness and depression; they received him with respect, and conducted him in silence to the church, where the Cardinal, who officiated, came forward to receive him. Masaniello returned his embrace, and placed a paper in his hand—

* "Ce fut une promenade bien funeste pour Masaniello, s'il est vrai, comme on l'a cru, et comme il n'est que trop vraisemblable, qu'il y avala du poison, qui lui fut donné par ordre du vice-roi dans l'eau que Masaniello but, après avoir mangé quelque fruit."—*Histoire de la Révolution de Naples*.

† The author of the *Histoire de Naples* states distinctly, that Masaniello was poisoned by order of the Viceroy; but the ordinary effects of poison are inflammation, and not insanity.

a written paper directed to the Viceroy. It was his voluntary resignation. In giving it, he observed, "that those whom he had saved, were about to abandon him, that his career was over! and that, after having made one last tour of that city which he had preserved, he would return to the church, and await the death-blow which would now soon be struck." Then releasing himself from the arms of the Cardinal, who in vain essayed to cheer him, he once more attempted to address the people, and was recommending to them the care of their own liberties, when he should no longer be there to protect them, but his strength and his ideas suddenly failed him, and two monks of the convent, perceiving his disorder, withdrew him from the tribune, and conducted him to their dormitory. There, flinging himself on a mattress, he was sinking into that deep repose he so much needed, when, roused by the vociferation of his own name, he started from his bed, hastily stepped forth, and firmly but mildly asked, "My people, do you seek me?" He was answered by a discharge of fire-arms, and instantly fell at the feet of his assassins, exclaiming, "*Traditori! ingrati!*" His head was severed from his body by a butcher, and sent to the Viceroy, who is said to have gazed on it with a triumphant smile: but so long as the causes of revolution shall continue to exist in Naples, its tyrants will not cease to tremble at the proverbial expression that "*Masaniello non è morto!*" Masaniello is not dead.

• CHAPTER VIII.

1647—1657.

WITH the life of Masaniello ended all that was laudable in the revolutionary movement, of which he had been the leader and the chief.* Other interests came into play; but the cabals of a vile and sordid aristocracy, the intrigues of the French government through their agents at Rome,

* "Il semble que Masaniello n'avait paru que pour manifester son génie, sa supreme intelligence, sa capacité, et pour opérer les plus grands évènements. En huit jours, cet homme, simple pêcheur, assujettit un grand royaume, le delivre de la servitude, conduit à sa perfection le grand ouvrage de l'abolition des impôts," &c.—*Histoire de la Révolution de Naples.*

the headlong enterprises of the gallant and unfortunate Duc de Guise (whose object was to erect Naples into a republic), the revolt of the other cities and towns of the kingdom, and the sanguinary contests of factions, fighting not for liberty but for plunder,—all ended in the triumph of the house of Hapsburg, whose tyranny had incapacitated the slaves it had debased, for recovering that liberty of which it had so long deprived them.

Whatever had been the expectations of Salvator Rosa and Aniello Falcone, they ended with the life of Masaniello.* The view which that event gave them of the character of a people formed in the school of political degradation, dissipated every hope of romantic patriotism.† Falcone fled to France, where he lived with honour and respect, and died full of years and of fame. Salvator Rosa returned to Rome,—

Faint, weary, sore, embroiled, grieved, and brent,
and glowing with that “smart and inward ire,” beyond all

* Salvator, in his fourth Satire, some part of which was evidently sketched on his return from Naples, apostrophizes the spirit and virtues of Masaniello with great force and feeling, and in a strain which recalls Petrarch’s invocation to Cola Rienzi.

“Mira l’alto ardimento, ancor ch’è inerme
Quante ingiustizie in un sol giorno opprime
Un vile, un scalzo, un pescatore, un verme.
Mira in basso natale alma sublime,
Che per serbar della sua patria i fregi,
Le più superbe teste adegua all’ime,
Ecco ripullular gli antichi pregi
De’ Codri, e degli Ancuri e de’ Trasiboli
S’oggi un vil piscator dà norma ai regi.”

La Guerra.

† The people, stunned by the death of Masaniello, exhibited, in the first instance, neither grief nor resentment; and when the partisans of Spain had his body drawn through the city and thrown into a ditch, they looked on, says an impartial historian, “avec un sang-froid et une insensibilité qui les caractérisent.” A few days after, the popular feeling arose to frenzy; they recovered the body of their idol, and his funeral was conducted with almost royal magnificence. The remains of the unfortunate Captain-general lay in state in the church del Carmine, covered with a royal mantle; a crown was placed on his head, and the bâton of his office and a naked sword were deposited on his bier. With equal pomp, and followed by 80,000 persons, the body was paraded through the city; and as the procession passed the Viceroy’s palace, the terrified Duke sent forth eight of his pages to join the cavalcade, and he ordered the guards to pay military honours to the remains of the man he had so basely assassinated.

power, and, perhaps, all inclination to conceal. The political state of Rome, engrossed and agitated as its society then was by the French and Spanish cabals, favoured his security, and spared him those persecutions which, as an abettor of any revolution, he might in other times have sustained.

Too agitated to still down his bitter and perturbed spirit to the tranquil pursuit of his art, the stings of his lacerated and disappointed feelings found vent in a medium more adapted to give a rapid and ready expression to powerful emotion. Internal evidence refers the composition of his magnificent poem "*La Babilonia*," to this period. This poem is a sort of dramatic eclogue, in which, under a somewhat allegorical form, the character and principles of Salvator himself, the moral and political position of his native country, and the disappointment of all his hopes of its regeneration, are given, with such truth and force, and in such deep and honest bursts of indignation, as cannot fail to excite a sympathy in the reader for the patriot, exceeding even his admiration for the poet,—powerfully as it must be called forth by the merits of a highly poetical composition.

Tirreno, a fisherman on the shores of the Bosphorus, is discovered just as the morning-star ushers in the dawn, flinging all the instruments of his profession into the waves, and giving utterance to an indignant vow to abandon for ever an element and a pursuit which have mocked him with endless disappointment. Ergasto, a traveller, arrives at the moment of this sacrifice, and inquires its cause. The answer of the poet, whose own feelings of misery come at once upon the canvas, is the very epic of melancholy discontentment—a discontentment engendered by the finest sensibility, blasted in its hopes and its efforts for ameliorating human sufferings, and amending human institutions.

The artful inquiries of Ergasto draw the piscatory misanthropist into a detailed development of his contempt for society, and lead him to speak of himself and the country of his birth. It is then that the impetuous Neapolitan, smarting under the still-bleeding wounds of his disappointed patriotism, sketches boldly and bitterly a view of that country, the slave of slaves, ("*patria, serva dei servi*,"") which seems to glory in the chain to which she has again

basely submitted. He sees only in the land of his birth, the "hated object of his memory," ("l'odioso oggetto della mia memoria,") the focus of all abuses in government, of all ridicules and superstitions in society! The memory neither of Virgil nor of Sannazaro, which he venerates, so blinds him with national vanity, as to render him insensible to the vices of the degraded and despotic nobility, to the miseries of the oppressed people, or to the preponderating influence of knaves and bandits, who everywhere hold the ascendant. He solemnly renounces Naples for ever; and leaving to others "their sympathy for Vesuvius and Posilippo," he resolves to seek the means of existence and of fame far from the magic circle of that false syren, to whose sweet song he is no longer bound; and who, with all her witcheries, has become the object of his abhorrence, his hatred, and his contempt!

For daring truth, deep feeling, and powerful expression, there is not perhaps anything in Italian poetry comparable to this satire. Its language is the poetry of passion; and while the feeble Della-Cruscans are seeking in its noble bursts of an almost sublime indignation, for some word that has not been "*bagnato nel Arno*,"* or some term unauthorized by the Trecentisti, the superior intellects and more sensible spirits of all ages and nations, and, above all, of such nations as resemble the unhappy country of Salvator, will read his Babilonia with that profound and corresponding sympathy which forms the highest eulogium, as it is the surest evidence, of genius and inspiration; an eulogium which professional criticism, in its cold and scanning technicalities, can "neither give nor take away."

The return of Salvator to Rome was no sooner known,† than his friends and admirers crowded to his house, mingling, with pleasure at his arrival, and with fresh demands upon his talents,‡ a lively curiosity respecting the events in which he had been engaged. Salvator, whose words were pictures, related his own adventures, and detailed the events

* "Bathed in the Arno," i. e. sanctioned by the usage of the Florentine writers.

† "Ritornò a Roma, vi aprì casa; ecco giunto a grado di gran maestro," &c.—*Pascoli*.

‡ "A Roma dove subito ebbe molti commissioni, e fece molti lavori."—*Vita di S. Rosa*.

of which he had both been a witness and promoter, with all that powerful and graphic eloquence for which he was so celebrated. Nor was this the measure of his imprudence: for he hesitated not to recite such passages of "La Babilonia" and "La Guerra" as were then hastily thrown together, and recited them with all the bitterness of spirit in which they were composed.

While, in the presence of princes and of prelates,* he thus inveighed against tyranny and oppression, with all a poet's fire and a patriot's zeal, two splendid pictures which he had executed for himself, since his return, were exhibited in the chamber where he held his conversazioni, which added materially to the impression. These were illustrative of those bold opinions, and of that melancholy experience, which had disturbed the tranquillity of his life, and shadowed even its brightest days with sadness. The first represented a beautiful girl, seated on a glass globe; her brow was crowned with flowers, the fairest and the frailest: her arms were filled by a lovely infant, which she appeared to caress; while its twin-brother, cradled at her feet, was occupied in blowing air-bubbles from a tube. A child, something older, was mischievously employed in setting fire to a wreath of flax twined round a spindle. Above this group of blooming youth and happy infancy, with wings outspread and threatening aspect, hovered the grim figure of Death, dictating the following sentence:—

"Nasci poena—vita labor—necesse mori."†

The label affixed to this painted allegory, called the picture

* Salvator is said never to have suffered the rank or office of his auditors to interfere with the freedom of his expression in his poetical recitations. Cardinal Sforza Pallavicini, one of the most splendid patrons and rigid critics of his day, was curious to hear the improvisatore of the Via Babbuina, and sent an invitation requesting Salvator's company at his palace. Salvator frankly declared that two conditions were annexed to his accepting the honour of the Eminentissimo's acquaintance; first, that the Cardinal should come to *his* house, as he never recited in any other; and next, that he should not object to any passage, whose omission would detract from the original character of his works, or compromise his own sincerity. The Cardinal accepted the condition. The next day all the literary *freluquets* of Rome crowded to the levee of the hypercritical Porporato, to learn his opinion of a poet, whose style was without precedent. The Cardinal declared, with a justice which posterity has sanctioned, that "Salvator's poetry was full of splendid passages, but that, as a whole, it was unequal."

† "To receive life, a punishment—to live, a toil—to die, a necessity."

"L'Umana Fragilità."* It expressed the labour of existence; and the nothingness of life, a truth which none feel so keenly as they who, like Salvator, are endowed with qualities which the vulgar believe most largely to contribute to the enjoyment of their possessor. But that fatal pre-eminence which the lowly worship, and the envious malign, gives only a finer faculty for suffering: and while it opens the sources of petty vexations, and exalts the poignancy of the greater moral afflictions, it places its gifted victim at an immeasurable distance from the heartless enjoyments and trifling pleasures of more ordinary humanity.

The second of these philosophical pictures was a painted illustration of his poetical satires. "Fortune," as she is represented when fancy paints her in her brightest smiles, appeared as a fair woman, pouring from a cornucopia a torrent of riches, honours, crowns, mitres, crosses, jewels, gems, and coins, which fell in endless succession upon a multitude of gaping, greedy candidates for her fickle favour. These candidates were all either unclean beasts, crawling reptiles, or birds of prey, filthy, sanguinary, and rapacious. In their eagerness to snatch at the treasures which Fortune seemed to reserve for them, they trampled under their feet the symbols of genius, liberty, and philosophy, which impeded their efforts; and books, globes, and instruments, the pen, the pencil, the stylus, and the compass, lay broken, sullied, and neglected. The ass decked himself with orders, the swine assumed the mitre, the fox mounted a cross; wolves, vultures, and tigers divided amongst them princely

* "The frailty of man."

The Abbate Baptista Ricciardi, the dear friend of Salvator, alludes to this celebrated picture in a canzone addressed to the painter:—

"Rosa, il nascere è pena,
Il vivere è fatica,
Ed il morir necessità fatale!"

How strongly this insignificance of life and the image of death were impressed on Salvator's mind, is evinced through all his works. The picture itself is but a repetition of the same idea in his *Babilonia*.

"Io so che l' uom della fortuna è un gioco,
E a far che mai gloria mortal mi domini
Mi figuro il sepolcro in ogni loco."

"I know that man is the jest of fortune; and that mortal glories may never seduce me, I have ever before me the image of the tomb."

coronets and royal crowns, and Fortune laughed while she thus accorded as caprice or violence directed her choice. This picture was known in Salvator's gallery by the name of "La Fortuna."* "It happened," says Baldinucci, "that at this time his (Rosa's) house was frequented by many great personages, secular as well as ecclesiastical; who were not only desirous to behold his beautiful pictures, but to enjoy his recitations of his own poetry. While he was still employed upon his picture of 'La Fortuna,' the two cardinals, Bandinelli and Rusponi, coming out from Salvator's house, were met by Don Mario Ghigi, the brother of our now reigning pontiff Alexander VII. He, stopping his carriage to salute their eminences, demanded of them what entertainment they had been enjoying that morning."—"May it please your Excellency," said one of the cardinals, "we have just come from Salvator Rosa's, where we have not only heard good satire *recited*, but seen good satire *painted*."—"I comprehend right well," quoth Don Mario, "that your Eminences, having been present at Salvator Rosa's accademia, may have heard good satire recited; but satire painted! in troth I am at a loss to guess your meaning." One of the cardinals, approaching the prince's carriage, detailed to him the subjects of "La Fortuna" and "L'Umana Fragilità," and spoke of their execution in a

* "Ma questa Fortuna," (says Baldinucci, and Pascoli repeats the pun,) —"fu la *mala* fortuna di Salvatore." This picture, and another on the same subject, he sold to his friend Carlo Rossi. It was the only one reserved by Rossi's heir Vallore, who afterwards sold that also to the Duke of Beaufort. Pascoli, speaking of this picture in a style scarcely translatable, says, "Il famoso della Fortuna, per cui Salvatore ebbe, allorché lo misò in mostra a San Giovanni Decollato, tanti guai, che non vi valle meno della autorità di Don Mario Ghigi, fratello dell' allora regnante pontefice per liberarselo, che fu venduto per seicento scudi, mesi sono, al Duca di Beaufort, e lo porta con altri molti comperati da lui in Inghilterra." "The famous picture of La Fortuna, (for which Salvator, having exposed it on the feast of St. John, suffered so much persecution—a persecution from which it required nothing less than the authority of Don Mario Ghigi, brother to the reigning Pope, to liberate him,) was sold some months back for 600 scudi to the Duke of Beaufort, who carried it, with many other pictures which he had bought, to England." The "mesi sono," refer to somewhere about the latter end of the seventeenth century. The Rossi gallery may have been sold by the last inheritor, about twenty years after the death of the original collector. Pascoli, who writes with all the inaccuracy which belongs to the feeble age of literature in which he lived, places this sale of La Fortuna in the pontificate of Alexander VII. It occurred in that of Innocent X.

manner that rendered the prince impatient to behold them. The next morning Don Mario, accompanied by his brother the future pope, was at an early hour in the gallery of Salvator; and he was so charmed by the merits, and so amused by the humour, of the pictures, that he purchased "*L'Umana Fragilità*" at a high price, and talked of "*La Fortuna*" in such terms in the circles of Rome, that all who could get admission to Salvator's gallery went, to satisfy their curiosity or to gratify their taste. Thrown off his guard by a vanity but too susceptible, and in this instance flattered up to its bent, or haply, in his then moody state of mind, reckless of all consequence, Salvator Rosa, in an evil hour, permitted these two extraordinary pictures to take their place in the Pantheon, on the return of the feast of San Giovanni Decollato. The Roman people, with all the shrewdness of discontent, caught the spirit of "*La Fortuna*," and applied its satire with admirable quickness. Their praises amounted to vociferations, and they elevated the painter to the dignity of their champion. The powerful members of the community, thus awakened, saw only in this sarcastic picture a libel, and they called it, "*una solennissima pasquinata*," which, under a less mild pontificate, would have doomed the artist to a public and ignominious death: "for," said they, "Nicola Franco, for a less insolent satire upon the reigning powers, was put to death by Pius V. of blessed memory."

But the inveterate professional rivals of Salvator gave the last blow to the peace and security of the imprudent artist, by making an artful application to personal and individual peculiarities, of a general satire, that aimed but at classes and institutions; and malice instantly supplied a key. This was done in the true spirit of spiteful mediocrity; and it had all the success which such low and dark artifices ever obtain, when addressed to the shallow intellects and susceptible self-love of the vulgar great. The nose of one powerful ecclesiastic, the eye of another, were detected in the brutish physiognomy of the swine who were treading pearls and flowers under their feet—a Cardinal was recognized in an ass scattering with his hoof the laurel and myrtle which lay in his path; and in an old goat reposing on roses, some there were who even fancied the infallible lover of Donna Olymphia, the Sultana Queen of the Quirinal! The cry of atheism and sedition—of contempt of esta-

blished authorities*—was thus raised under the influence of private pique and long-cherished envy ; it soon found an echo in the painted walls where the Conclave sat “in close divan,” and it was bandied about from mouth to mouth, till it reached the ears of the Inquisitor, within the dark recesses of his house of terrors. A cloud was now gathering over the head of the devoted Salvator, which, it seemed, no human power could avert. But, ere the bolt fell, his fast and tried friend, Don Mario Ghigi, threw himself between his protégé and the horrible fate which awaited him, by forcing the sullen satirist to draw up an apology, or, rather, an explanation of his fatal picture.† This explanation, bearing the title of a “Manifesto,” he obtained permission to present to those powerful and indignant persons in whose hands the fate of Salvator now lay. In it, Salvator explained away all that was supposed to be personal in his picture ; and proved that his hogs were not churchmen, his mules pretending pedants, his asses Roman nobles, and his birds and beasts of prey the reigning despots of Italy. But, in disclaiming personalities—in courageously owning that the hidden sense of his picture was the blindness of fortune, the success of mediocrity, the triumphs of aggression, and the neglect of genius, worth, and independence, in an age at once demoralized and ungifted, though he might have suspended the blow of authority, he could not silence the clamours of the bigoted and the servile ; and these continued so loud and so persevering, that even the influence of the house of Ghigi (though one of the brothers was then a cardinal) could not longer have protected him. It was in this moment of disquietude, says one of his anonymous biographers, “that a sensible change took place in his constitution, naturally full of bile.” Abandoned by the idle and

* Pascoli and others hint that this was not the first occasion on which Salvator incurred the *odium theologicum*, although he counted among his friends some of the most celebrated churchmen of his day.

† This apology was in the possession of Baldinucci, “Ed io conservo appresso di me una molto dotta apologia stata fatta a sua difesa, in quel tempo, pervenutami fra molte scritture originali ed altre, rimase alla morte di Rosa e a me state donate per ajuto di notizia per quello che io vo ora scrivendo.” “And I preserve in my possession a very learned apology made in his defence at that time ; which came to me with many original and other writings found on Salvator’s death, and communicated to me in aid of the notice I am now writing.”—*Baldinucci, Vita di S. Rosa.*

the great, whom his delightful talents had so long contributed to amuse, he voluntarily excluded himself from the few true and staunch friends who clung to him in his adversity, at a moment when to be seen in his society carried with it the penalty of proscription. Shutting himself up equally from all he loved and all he despised, he awaited with gloomy and unyielding firmness the completion of his destiny; but an honourable means of escaping from the dungeons of the Inquisition (whither he was hourly expected to be conducted) was afforded him by the interference of a family, whose love of genius and protection of the arts had survived all the sterner virtues which had once distinguished their race.

In this moment of Salvator's deepest despondency, the Prince Giovanni Carlo de' Medici offered him the protection of his brother, the reigning Grand Duke of Tuscany, and urged him to fly to Florence (while the means of escape were yet in his power), where wealth and honours awaited him as the recompense of his shining and unrivalled talents.* For the friendship of this bold and factious young prelate, Salvator was indebted to Signor Fabrizio Pier Mattei, the diplomatic agent of the Grand Duke, who at that time occupied the Palazzo Madama,† in Rome, one among the most distinguished houses which Rosa had been most accustomed to frequent. To this palace resorted the younger members of the Medici family on their visits of pleasure, business, or ambition, to the papal capital. Signor

* "Questo (Salvator) fu condotto dal Cardinale Giovan Carlo a Firenze, e vi stette per setti anni, or poeta, or pittore, or comico applaudito sempre pel suo bello spirito, e frequentato dai letterati, di quali ridondò allora in qualsia genere di dottrina il paese." "Salvator was conducted to Florence by Card. John Charles, where he stayed seven years, now conspicuous as a poet, now as a painter, and now as a comedian: and always applauded for his wit, and frequented by the literati, who in every branch abound in that country."—*Lanzi*, vol. i. *Scuola Flor.*

This assertion of Lanzi is borne out by all the writers on the subject of Salvator, which the author of these pages has seen, except Passeri, who places Salvator's visit to Florence immediately after his attack upon the private theatricals of Bernini. But honest Passeri, who is an epitome of the confusion and inaccuracy of the Italian writers of the seventeenth century, troubles himself so little with dates, that in his whole Life of Salvator there are but two—the day of the birth, and that of the death of his hero.

† So called from its having been built by *Catherine de' Medici*, or, as she was always called in Italy, *Madama Caterina*!

Fabrizio is described as being a chivalrous and intelligent gentleman, alternately the host and the guest of Salvator, and the warmest of his admirers: and it was in his circle that Rosa was first presented to the Prince Giovan Carlo, who was then negotiating for a Cardinal's hat.* The spirit and taste of this prince, who was fitter to be a leader of condottieri, like his collateral ancestor, than a member of the Conclave, found in the works, character, and humour of Salvator much that accorded with his own, and he soon conceived for him one of those violent *engouemens*, which the great are apt to mistake for friendship.

This was not the first invitation which Salvator had received to visit the Court of Florence. The Prince Mattei de' Medici† had previously commissioned Signor Fabrizio to induce Rosa to go into Tuscany and execute some great pictures for his own palace, and for the gallery of the Sere-nissimo himself; but there was something in the arrangement, which was then termed "entering into the service of a prince" ("portarsi ai servigi") from which Salvator's savage love of liberty revolted; and he had so frequently and so publicly made professions of independence and philosophic simplicity of life, that it would have been a derogation from consistency to have *voluntarily* bound himself, like the other great painters of the age, to the particular service of any sovereign.‡ But, though hitherto

Free and to none accountable—preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp,—

yet the urgency of his present condition, the intreaties of

* He was created Cardinal by Innocent X. in 1644–5. For the character of this bustling and ambitious young Prince-Cardinal, see *Memoire de Retz*.

† Mattei, or Mattias de' Medici, was governor of Sienna. He was the patron of Livio Mehus, and some other Flemish painters, whom his protection induced to visit Tuscany.

‡ Salvator has described these feelings in the following lines of his *BABYLONIA*:—

Altro non chiesi mai, che viver sano,
E ne giubila il cuor, nè mi vergogno
Di guadagnarmi il pan di propria mano.
A golosi bocconi io non agogno;
Chi va con fame a mensa, e stracco a letto
Di piume e di favor non ha bisogno!

Fabrizio, his disgust at Roman society,* and the friendship of Cardinal Giovan Carlo, prevailed over these scruples, and induced him to accept an invitation, which the first artists of Europe had been proud to obtain.†

Merged in the numerous travelling suite of the prince-bishop, he left Rome, and passed its gates either unobserved of the *sbirri*, which then, as now, guarded its entrance, or by the willing oversight of his persecutors, whose policy may have induced them to wink at the self-banishment of a man whose genius made him an object of European interest, but whose presence was an insult upon the existing order of things.

Ferdinand II., the reigning Archduke of Tuscany, had been a disciple of Galileo, who had added the "Stelle Medicee"‡ to the heavenly bodies; he was also the founder of the Accademia del Cimento, and loved the arts and sciences not as a mere "Mecenate," but as a professor. It was to this prince and to his brother the Cardinal Leopold, that Florence, in the middle of the seventeenth century, owed much of the scientific character, by which her elegant but somewhat pedantic society was then distinguished.§

At the moment that Salvator left Rome for Florence, the Palazzo Pitti, the palace of the Medici, was an open study, where the greatest masters of the age had recently worked, or were still working. Albano's voluptuous imagery was still wet upon the walls of that precious cabinet, consecrated to the *pious* meditations of Cardinal Giovan Carlo, who had seduced the Anacreon of painting from the luxurious retreat of the "Medola" in the Bolognese.

The sad and saintly Carlo Dolce, who had solemnly vowed his pencil to the Virgin,|| left his cell of Saint Benedict to

* "Insana
Turba de' vivi perfidi, e malvagi,
Senza sè, senza amor, cruda, inumana."

La Guerra.

† "In tali noiose circostanze venutagli l'occasione di portarsi ai servizi della corte di Toscana, &c. &c."—*Vita di Rosa, tratta di vari Autori.*

‡ The four satellites of Jupiter, discovered by Galileo in the reign of Cosmo II.

§ Among the precious contributions of Ferdinand and Leopold to the gallery of Florence are the fine heads of Cicero, the bronze idol, supposed to be one of the finest specimens of ancient art in the world, Titian's *Venus*, most of the valuable portraits, and the works of Salvator.

|| Carlo Dolce not only dedicated his pencil to the Virgin (as Tartini did

supply the oratories and chapel of the Pitti with crucified Saviours and "Madri delle sette dolori;" and Pietro da Cortona, who had already established his sect of the "Cortoneschi," had abandoned the patronage of the Barberini (whose self-assumed virtues he had eternized on the walls of their Roman palace), in order to enrich that noble suite of rooms in the Pitti palace, which are still dedicated to his name and labours.*

These were great names to compete with, in a professional point of view; and their splendour and their vogue were sufficient to intimidate one whose harassed and worn spirit rendered him peculiarly susceptible to all disheartening impressions. But from the first glance which Salvator Rosa obtained of that

"Arno gentile d'ogni grazia ornato"—

from the first view of those cupolas and spires which rose above the tombs of Michael Angelo and Machiavel, and recalled the memory of Dante and of Petrarch, the spirits of the fugitive appear to have resumed their finest tone of brilliant exhilaration. The land of song, of poesy, and of painting, never received within her bosom a more devoted and enthusiastic pilgrim. The fame of the painter, poet, musician, philosopher, and dramatist, had long preceded his arrival. The villas of his dear friends the Maffei and the Ricciardi cheered his eyes, and gave him the first welcome

his violin to St. Anthony of Padua), but made a solemn vow never to paint any but sacred subjects. His Madonnas, however, were all portraits of Maria Madelina Balducci. Carlo Dolce was a member of the Compagnia di San Benedetto, a very rigid congregation. He was the victim, says Balducci, of a pertinacious melancholy, which at times made it impossible to obtain a word from him: all his answers were sighs. On the day of his wedding, when the company were met for the ceremony, he was nowhere to be found. At last he was discovered in the church of the Annunziata, prostrate on the steps of the great altar, before a crucifix.

* Pietro da Cortona came to Florence in 1640, by the special invitation of the Grand Duke Ferdinand II. While working on the apartment called "The Mercury," he took some disgust to the Florentine Court, and, returning hastily to Rome, sent his excuses to the Grand Duke. His paintings were finished by his pupil, Ciro Ferri. But before he departed, he had formed a new school at Florence, which was "acclamato da' piu autorevoli professori" (applauded by the most highly considered professors). In conjunction with the Padre Ottonelli, a Jesuit, he wrote a book on painting and sculpture, now become extremely scarce: it was published in Florence, 1652.

on his route. Some of his best pictures already decorated the walls of the Florentine houses. His cantatas had floated on the classic waves of the Arno, and had "furnished forth" many a serenata beneath the casements of the Piazza del Duomo and Della Santa Croce; and many an old stager of the little academic theatres of Tuscany longed to break a lance with the far-famed Coviello of the Roman Carnival.

The departure of Salvator from Rome was an escape; his arrival in Florence was a triumph. The Grand Duke and the princes of his house received him, not as an hireling, but, as he had frankly painted himself,—as one whose principles and genius placed him beyond the possibility of dependence.* An annual income was assigned to him, during his residence in Florence, in the service of the Court,† besides a stipulated price for each of his pictures; and he was left perfectly unconstrained, and at liberty to paint for whom else he pleased.

The prince, says Passeri, received him "con amorevolezza, e ne faceva stima grande, trattendolo assai onorevolmente, si nelle provvisioni come nella cortesia" (with affection, and esteemed him highly, treating him with great honour, both in pecuniary matters and in courtesy).

The character, and in fact the manners and talents of Salvator, came out in strong relief, as opposed to the servile deportment and more professional acquirements of the herd of artists of all nations, then under the protection of the Medici. He was received at the Palazzo Pitti not only as an artist, but as a guest; and the Medici, at whose board Pulci (in the time of their Magnifico) had sung his *Morgante Maggiore* with the fervour of a rhapsodist, now received at their table another improvvisatore,‡ with equal courtesy and graciousness. The Tuscan nobility, in imitation of the Court, and in the desire to possess Salvator's pictures, treated him with singular honour.§ The Capponi,

* "Un galantuomo son io d' una natura
Che al par di Menedemo," &c. &c.—*Satiri*.

† Pascoli calls this pension "grosso annuale stipendio."

‡ The *Orlando Innamorato* of Boiardo was sung in the same manner at the table of the D'Este; and Carolan, the last of the Irish bards, rhapsodized in the halls of the O'Connors so lately as the year 1730.

§ "I nobili, chi a gara facevano onore e cortesie, per aver suoi quadri."—*Pascoli*.

the Gerini, the Corsini, the Guadagni, and the Falconieri, are mentioned among his particular intimates and among the candidates for his works and his society. Immediately on his arrival at Florence, Salvator took a large and commodious house in the Croce al Trebio, al canto di Cini, and he furnished it handsomely according to the taste of that day. In the excitement of one suddenly raised from the dark broodings of despondency, he dashed at once into a new career, more consonant to his epicurean temperament, than to his system of stoical philosophy. "Salvator," says Passeri, "who was always of the most generous and lofty spirit, and was desirous of a great name and reputation, resolved to place himself upon an equal footing with the cavaliers of the Court, whom he frequently entertained with the most sumptuous banquets, which cost him from thirty to fifty scudi a time; and in truth those lords accepted of his hospitable invitations with right good will." The fact thus simply detailed, may well be believed, when it is known that the "*lautissime cene, ricchi pranzi*," (sumptuous suppers and rich dinners) consisted of the rarest and most exquisite viands; and that one, who from habit lived sparingly, and whose favourite dish was fresh figs,* was yet well aware that his brilliant conversation was best relished when accompanied by beccaficos and ortolans, his bon-mots more greedily swallowed when washed down with the juice of the Tuscan grape, or the wines of Burgundy. But while the ennobled descendants of the merchant-citizens of republican Florence were feasted by the hospitality, and amused by the wit, of their plebeian host, they never for a moment lost sight of the immeasurable distance existing between those whom fortune had distinguished, and the man who boasted only of the aristocracy of nature: and the Eccellentissimi, Eminentissimi, and Serenissimi who deigned to partake of feasts provided by the honest earnings of genius and industry, smiled in derision at the vanity of the *low-born artist* who sought to surround himself with scarlet hats and purple stockings, mitres, coronets, ribbons, and stars, and all the masquerading panoply, which policy has adopted, to make a false and ludicrous distinction

* Baldinucci says, that if a basket of this fruit arrived from the country, when Salvator was engaged to some luxurious dinner, he was sure to send his excuse and sit down to his fresh figs at home.

between man and man. Unluckily for the titled guests of Rosa, they smiled not unobserved! Not a glance of the eye, not a scornful curvature of the lip, not a movement of the elevated brow, escaped the never-erring perceptions of genius, sharpened in all its faculties by a suspicious and wounded self-love.

Salvator was promptly struck with a sense of his weakness; and his discovery was confirmed by an incident, extremely characteristic of his position as a low-born man of talent coming in contact with the heartlessness and bad taste so often discoverable in the spoiled children of fortune, whose society his vanity had urged him to cultivate. Proceeding to the Corso in his carriage, after one of his own sumptuous dinners, he perceived that some of those noble guests who had the most eagerly accepted his invitation, and on that very day had partaken of his hospitality, turned away to avoid his salutation, in a spot where so many of their own caste were present to witness the "Good den, Sir Richard," of the familiar artist. This conviction sunk so deeply into his irritable mind, that many years afterwards, when residing in Rome, he frequently related the anecdote to Passeri with unabated bitterness of spirit.*

Salvator's knowledge of the degraded nobility of Rome and Naples had long led him to remark,

"How low, how little are the great, how indigent the proud!"

but he probably expected something better from the descendants of the free citizens of Florence. In this, however, he was disappointed; and his opinions of this class live in his works for generations yet unborn, while the insipid mystifications of the wits of the Tuscan red-book died where they fell.† From the moment that Rosa was aware of his folly, he shut his door against all who had

* "E quando ritornò in Roma, mi disse più volte, che quei cavalieri ai quali faceva tante cortesie, nel medesimo giorno dopo il desinare, incontrandolo per lo passeggio in carrozze, e vedendolo, ni meno gli guardavano addosso."—"And when he returned to Rome, he often told me, that those nobles to whom he had shown so much hospitality, meeting him in their carriages even on the very day on which he had feasted them, refused to look upon and salute him."—*Passeri*.

† Salvator observes in his letters, "Their fire is of straw, mine is asbestos."—The conceit is not quite correct, but the expression is forcible.

nothing but mere rank or courtly fashion to recommend them. Far, however, from abandoning society, he only selected it. His extravagant hospitality was not reformed; but it was directed to better purposes; and the Poloniuses of the palace Pitti, the little courtiers of a little court—the worst of all society,—gave place to whatever professional talent, wit, worth, or genius, Florence could at that time boast of possessing within her walls. The cold etiquette and courtly ceremony of his guests of many quarterings and few ideas was banished from his table, and was succeeded by freedom, intellectual vivacity, and that playful ease, which is only to be enjoyed by superior minds, in the gracious consciousness of a full and perfect equality. From that moment, as Baldinucci observes, the house of Salvator became “an academy of wits, the habitation of hilarity, and the mart of gaiety.”*

In addition to the principal artists and literati of Tuscany, whatever was the most distinguished of the higher ranks for taste and talent, was to be seen in Salvator's weekly assemblies. The accomplished Count Maffei, the poetical Duke di Salviati, Cardinal Baldinelli, all visitants in the Via Babbuina at Rome, were likewise congregated in the “Croce del Trebio” at Florence. To the possessors of these historical names were added, many now well known to science and to art: Torricelli, the celebrated inventor of the barometer; the learned Andrea Cavalcante; Francesco Rovai, one of the few amusing rhymers among the Seicentisti; Valerio Chimentelli, professor of moral philosophy at Pisa; his successor Battista Ricciardi, then only known as an agreeable poet; the learned Dottore Berni; the facetious Paole Vendremini, secretary of state to the Venetian republic, (then on a diplomatic mission at the Court of Tuscany;) Filippo Apollone Aretino, a fashionable dramatist; Salvetti, a literato of eminence and poet of society; Minucci, afterwards the editor of the “Malmantile;” and Lorenzo Lippi, the author of that poem, (one of the most playful and burlesque productions of the age,) who, in all probability, would not have written it, had he never known Salvator Rosa. The brightest triumphs of genius are not

* “Un accademia delle belle facultade, l'abitazione della giocondità, ed il mercato della allegrezza.”

unfrequently the results of accident; and it is a strange coincidence, that Milton also received the first ideas of his *Paradise Lost*, in those very circles in which Salvator now presided.*

To the distinguished persons mentioned by name as the constant guests of Salvator Rosa, many of a nearly equal merit, though of less note, were from time to time added, until their number, talent, and learning, and the nature of their well-sustained conversations, induced him to propose the formation of an academy, which, by the name of the "Percossi," soon became one of the most celebrated and brilliant of Italy. It was not, however, conversation alone that gave its rapid vogue to the Percossi, but circumstances always in accordance with the taste of every nation—good cheer and pleasurable amusement, private theatricals, followed by the most exquisite suppers. The desire expressed to see Salvator in some of his dramatic characters, together with the notoriety of the histrionic talents of other members of the society, induced the new-formed academy to give a series of dramatic representations during some months in every year; and the idea was so much relished by the *elegantes* of Florence, that Cardinal Leopold de' Medici lent his beautiful Casino di San Marco for a theatre.†

The pieces performed on this occasion (and they have

* The first hint of the *Paradise Lost* is said to have been taken from an Italian tragedy. Many of the persons who formed Salvator's society must have been members of those academies, which paid such respect to Milton on his visit to Florence some years before.

"For besides the curiosities and other beauties of the place (Florence), he (Milton) took great delight in the company and conversation there, and frequented their academies, as they are called, the meetings of the most polite and ingenious persons, which they have in this, as well as in the other principal cities of Italy, for the exercise and improvement of wit and learning amongst them."—*Life of Milton*.

† It may be observed, *en passant*, that there is scarcely an heroic subject presented by history, which had not been seized upon by the Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, before they were treated by the tragedians of France. The "*Fedra*" of Bosca, the "*Medea*" of Galladea, the "*Marianne*" of Dolce, the "*Semiramide*" of Manfredi, the "*Aristodemo*" of Dottori, the "*Cleopatra*" of Spinello, the "*Œdipo*" of Anguillara, and a hundred others written before the middle of the seventeenth century, were anticipations of Corneille, Voltaire, Monti, &c. &c. The "*MEROPE*" of Scipione Maffei preceded that of Voltaire, of which it must be considered the parent.

been cited as being “bellissime e bizzarissime commedie al improvviso”) were composed and acted exclusively by the academicians, with one exception in favour of a certain Messer Francesco Maria Agli, a Bolognese merchant, who, in the character of “Il Dottore,” the representative of the pedantry of the Bolognese university, was celebrated as the high priest “*and darling without end*,” of Thalia. It had long been the ambition of Agli to enter the lists with Salvator; and though at this time a sexagenary, the old merchant doffed the cap and slippers of his counting-house in the Piazza del Gigante, ordered oxen to his Cariola, and abandoning the ledger for the sock, crossed the Apennines, to offer his services to the PERCOSSI, by whom he was most graciously received. Salvator thus met with one, who, in technical language, could “act up to him,” and when they appeared together on the boards of San Marco,—the one as The Doctor, ponderous, prosing, and pedantic,—the other as the Neapolitan Valet de place, sharp, roguish, and rapid,—their farcical *quid pro quos*, arising out of the different dialects, which both spoke to perfection, had such an effect, that the dialogue was frequently interrupted by the reiterated shouts of laughter, which burst from the audience.*

From this period, to the end of his life, the histrionic merchant of Bologna came annually to Florence, for the pleasure of playing the Doctor Graziano to Salvator’s Pascariello.† But the comic performances of SAN MARCO were not exclusively *al improvviso*, being occasionally relieved by others of more regular composition, styled “*al soggetto nobile e grave*,” written by Carlo Dati, the friend of Milton, by Ricciardi and other writers, whose clerical habits forbade their contributing to the lighter amusements of the theatre. Viviani, a mathematician of great note in his day, took the low comedy part of Pasquella; Count Luigi Ridolfi personated the thick-witted clown Schitirzi; and the “Nobil-uomo” Francesco Cordino, exchanged his doublet and hose for a cap and farthingale, and figured as

* “Che le rise che alzavansi fra gli spettatori per lungo spazio interrompavano il loro dialogo.”

“For my part,” says Baldinucci, “I was always afraid that these violent convulsions of laughter, would some time or other have had a fatal termination.”

† At this period, Molière was performing in his own Etourdi and Les Précieuses at Beziers, before the little Court of the Prince de Conti.

the intriguing chambermaid Colombina. As no females were at this time permitted to appear on the stage, the other heroines were committed to some young and handsome abbés, who filled up the *corps dramatique* of the Perossi. To give the last finish to these elegant theatricals, the Prince-prelate, Giovan Carlo,* presided indirectly over them; and the Count Giulio Altoviti, the representative of one of the most illustrious families of Tuscany, undertook the post of Direttore, or acting manager; though he was often on the point of throwing up his office, from his inability to withstand the importunities of the Florentine gentry for admissions, beyond all proportion to the dimensions of his theatre.

The suppers which followed these representations, and which, according to the pedantry of the times, bore the name of "Simposi," were always given at the house of Salvator; and though the academicians professed to contribute some part of the expense, yet, in the end, the whole weight fell upon the munificent artist, who is described as having displayed great taste in the getting-up of these singular festivities. The apartments opened into gardens, and were lined with trees and odoriferous plants. The very floors were concealed by verdant mosses and natural flowers; and the whole was so picturesquely arranged, that it appeared a natural, and not an artificial bower, shaded by the freshest and most delicious foliage. The table partook of the singularity of one who, says a French critic on these occasions, "mettoit de l'esprit par tout;" and the choice viands, by appearing in masquerade, while they did justice to the cook, displayed much of the *concetti* of the age and country, from which even this wild son of the Apennines was not wholly exempt.†

On these occasions, Salvator occasionally recited some parts of his Satires, and sang those spirited compositions to

* In 1659, this Cardinal built a regular theatre at Florence, for the representation of operas.

† "A most whimsical thing it was to behold the arrangement of the table on the occasion of these Simposi. Some nights all the dishes were masked in pastry, even to the salad; on others, all were roasts—on others, soups, &c.; and much pretty and curious invention was displayed in thus giving an endless variety to the appearances and tastes of the same meats."—*Life, &c.*

his lute in his native Neapolitan,* which as provincial ballads, in the absence of all pretension, met with more indulgence from his Della Cruscan auditory, than was given to the anti-Tuscanisms of his graver poems.

To supply the extravagant claims which Salvator's liberal spirit was daily making on his purse, required, in the midst of all his intellectual and social enjoyments, great industry and inordinate gains. But his love of glory was paramount to every passion; and if his nights were given to recreation and society, his days were passed in labour and solitude. Shut up in his "fast closed chambers," ("ben chiuse stanze," as Baldinucci calls his work-rooms,) to which not even his own pupils were admitted, he worked with his usual rapidity, and with more than ordinary success. The first picture which he executed after his arrival in Florence, was his far-famed Battle-piece, for the Grand Duke Ferdinand, in which, at his highness' request, he introduced his own portrait in one of the corners. All Tuscany offered the homage of unqualified admiration before this splendid composition, which was followed by several landscapes, sea-ports, marine views, (mostly taken from the mountain coast scenery of the Abruzzi,) all bespoken, and liberally paid for by the Grand Duke, or his brothers Leopold and Giovan Carlo.

He felt himself, however, so little bound to work exclusively for these princes, that he occasionally permitted their orders to wait upon the commissions given by his own friends; and he painted successively, his "Heraclitus and Democritus" for Francesco Cordone;† four landscapes for the Marchese Capponi,‡ "which," says Baldinucci, "were perfectly beautiful (di tutte bellezze)"; and for the Marchese Gerini, his "Sage flinging treasures into the Ocean," and a "Fortune" covering her eyes with one hand, while with the other she scatters gold at random. His well-known piece called "Ancient Ruins," was painted for the Casa Grisoli; and what is still called "Salvator's grand landscape" (in which, says Baldinucci, *he surpassed him-*

* "Spiritose canzoni, che cantava in lingua Napolitana graziosamente sul liuto."—*Pascoli*.

† These pictures are known by the name of "The Laughing and Crying Philosophers." See Catalogue, vol. 2.

‡ Still preserved in the Capponi palace at Florence.

self), for the Marchese Guadagni. The price given for this last magnificent picture is always quoted as exorbitant; and Baldinucci states, that all the pictures which he sold at Florence were purchased at the very highest prices. It was, however, remarked that of those pictures which were executed while he resided in Tuscany, his best were such as he painted as presents for his most favoured friends. One of the most precious of these was his own portrait, done for a Florentine citizen, Messer Signorelli. This portrait represents him in his character of Pascariello; and it is remarkable for the hands being covered by what Baldinucci calls "tattered gloves." On the demise of Signorelli, it passed into the collection of Cardinal Leopold de' Medici.

Besides these various works, Salvator contrived from time to time to execute some great pictures for himself, ("per proprio studio,") which it was his pride and his vengeance to send to Rome, on the annual exhibition in the Pantheon, where the public beheld with increasing admiration the works of a man whose person was proscribed, but whose genius was beyond the reach of bans and bulls.* "Among these, the most remarkable was a Bacchanalian piece, full of poetical imagery. It represented a dark forest gloomed by the interweaving of trees, through which a vista appeared, whose termination was lost in the distance: while, in an opening, a group of male and female figures with children, all lightly habited with draperies floating in the air, frolicked round a statue of Bacchus. Others lay on the earth, drinking from vases and goblets; and some rolled in drunkenness, in a variety of the most appropriate attitudes. The composition was admirable, the scenery finely adapted to

* Salvator Rosa secretly deplored his banishment; and his impatience at being separated from Carlo Rossi, and some other of his friends, was so great, that he narrowly escaped losing his liberty to obtain an interview with them. About three years after his arrival in Florence, he took post-horses, and at midnight set off for Rome. Having reached the gardens of the "Vigna Navicella," and bribed the *custode* to lend them for a few hours, and otherwise to assist him, he dispatched a circular billet to eighteen of his friends, supplicating them to give him a rendezvous at the Navicella. Each believed that Salvator had fallen into some new difficulty which had obliged him to fly from Florence, and all attended his summons. He received them at the head of a well-furnished table, embraced them with tenderness, feasted them sumptuously, and then mounting his horse, returned to Florence before his Roman persecutors, or Tuscan friends, were aware of his adventure.

the grouping, and the shadows of the trees, by the exercise of a rare skill, were made to harmonize with the general tone of colouring: the whole picture was most singular. Others which he sent, were also in good style. They consisted of landscapes, battle-pieces, marine views, and historical subjects; all original, masterly, and spirited in the most eminent degree.”*

But, while thus laboriously devoted to business and to pleasure, insatiate in the pursuit of fame, and seeking to obtain it alike from contemporaries and from posterity by the cultivation of the most opposite talents; his susceptible spirits too frequently sunk under the exertions of his overworked mind; and fits of moody melancholy, the natural concomitants of the disease called genius, shadowed the settled sunshine of this portion of his life, and left him no solace but such as he could find in solitude or in friendship. Long and lonely walks amidst the forest gloom of Volterra, or pensive saunterings in the more lovely scenery of the Val d’Arno, with the friend of his most intimate selection, were the sure remedies to which he applied, when his temperament led him to view life in its own true colours, or when, the fervour of some transient excitement having died away, he felt a full conviction of the truth of his painted adage “Nasci poena, &c. &c. &c.” succeed to every brighter dream and more flattering illusion.

The friend par excellence, chosen to accompany him in these wanderings, was Lorenzo Lippi,† a man who seems to have been cast in the same mould with himself, though formed perhaps of an inferior clay. A painter by profession, a poet by taste, a philosopher upon system, and an epicurean from temperament: he yet was all these in a lower degree than Salvator; and this very inequality rendered their accordance but the more perfect: for Lippi looked up to Rosa; and Rosa liked to be respected, even by those by whom he was beloved. There was also another

* Passeri, p. 425.

† Lorenzo Lippi is described as having been “Spiritoso nei motti, bizzarro nelle risoluzioni, faceto e vivace nel conversare, e poeta nel suo genere di rara capacità.” “Brilliant in wit, capricious in act, facetious and lively in conversation, and a poet, in his own peculiar style, of great ability.” (*Vita*, &c.) According to Baldinucci, he was a man of the best morals, affectionate and charitable. I cannot find that Salvator had a single friend, that was not as eminent for moral worth as for talent and acquirements.

point of similitude between these eminent geniuses : they were both alive

“To every sense of ridicule in things ;”

and both indulged in the dangerous propensity with a most hazardous indiscretion ; too happy when they could laugh at a world, over which they were more frequently compelled to weep.

It occasionally happened that, when Salvator, after a hard day's work, felt both his strength and spirits flag, he hastened to the studio of Lippi, and pulling him forcibly from the scaffold, on which he was then painting his great picture of the “Triumph of David,”* carried him off to walk,—when saunterings which began at the Ave Maria, were continued till the midnight-bell of many a convent tolled its monks to their nocturnal devotions.† Sometimes the wanderers directed their steps, like Galileo,—“the Tuscan Artist,”—to the top of Fiesole ; but not solely to view “the moon's broad circumference,” or

“Descry new lands,
Rivers, and mountains in her spotty globe ;”

but to gaze on the scenery of the Decameron, the Magnone, the Villa di Sciffanoja, and the other features of a scene consecrated to the Novellatrici of Boccace, an author who was of their own school, and whom posterity classes among the earliest founders of the sect of Romanticism.‡

* In this picture, painted for the Count Agnolo Galli, the portraits of the Count, of Madelina his wife, and their seventeen beautiful children, are preserved. David, holding the head of Goliath, represented Lorenzo de' Galli, a singularly handsome youth ; and the mother and her daughters appeared “as the fairest among the daughters of the children of Israel.” Lippi, like Salvator, was an open contemner of schools and manners. He always studied from nature.

† Lippi might have rivalled any modern English pedestrian. “One morning at dinner, he suddenly took it into his head to go to Prato, a town ten miles distant from Florence ; so, starting from table, he arrived at Prato, saluted some of his friends, and returned home to finish his meal.” Baldinucci says, that he died the victim of his “indefatigable walking :” having made one of his usual tours in very hot weather, he was attacked with pleurisy, and perished in his fifty-eighth year, about 1652.

‡ Baldinucci relates, that these two humorous friends standing on a little bridge over the Arno, used to amuse themselves with the ignorance of the country people, by passing off their own figures, reflected in the water, as the *Antipodes*.

Sometimes the ramblers took the road to Pisa, which lies under the Poggio di San Romolo, and visited the pretty villa of their mutual friend Alfonso Parigi, a kinsman of Lippi. Seated in the marble portico of this villa (*La Mazzetta*), the eyes of the two painters fell naturally upon the Castle of Malmantile, an object whose picturesque beauty was singularly calculated to attract their attention.*

Malmantile crowned the heights of a neighbouring hill, at about a mile from Parigi's villa; and Lippi had not only made this ruin the goal of his morning walk, on his visits to his kinsman, but likewise the subject of some doggrel rhymes, which he was in the habit of stringing together with great facility. In these idle and unstudied lines Salvator Rosa saw so much wit and humour, that he prevailed on Lippi to give the subject a more serious consideration, and to render them the medium of an attack upon those self-styled "*Rettorici Atticisti*" who swarmed forth from the Della Cruscan school, to the total destruction of all good taste and manly literature.†

These persecutors of Tasso, these "*quindi e quinci*"‡ (whilomes and whereofs) had already been attacked with equal humour and severity by Salvator in his "*Poesia*," and he now not only strenuously encouraged his friend to execute his poem upon a grand scale, but furnished almost all the episodes, which were taken from the popular tales of the Neapolitan people.

The high burlesque poem of "*Il Malmantile raquistato*" is executed in strict imitation of the sublime *Gerusalemme* of Tasso, and its mock-heroic march is admirably contrasted with the low and familiar imagery in which it abounds, and which is given in the obsolete and vulgar idioms, and popular proverbs of Tuscany; § a taste which was then first

* Malmantile stood about ten miles from Florence, on the road to Pisa, between La Lastra and Montelupo. The word signifies, in the Tuscan dialect, an old tablecloth or tapestry; and "*Andar al Malmantile*" is a proverb tantamount to "dining with Duke Humphrey."

† "*Grandissimi furono gli stimoli che egli ebbe a ciò fare da Salvator Rosa.*"—*Baldinucci*.

He adds, that they lived in "*intrinseca domestichezza*," in great intimacy, and that it was in Salvator's house that Lippi first read his poem.

‡ "*Peggio non ho che quel sentir parlare
Con tanti quindi e quindi.*"—*Anton. Abbati*.

§ Much of the effect of this poem is now lost; but Baldinucci says, that

affected by the *purists* of Florence, the precursors of the "Trecentisti" of the present day. To add to the humour of this whimsical composition, the puerile tales of the nursery, and *les petits jeux* afterwards so much in fashion in France, were introduced in a variety of digressions and allusions;* and the whole was a satire upon the flimsy literature which in the seventeenth century succeeded to the prose of Machiavel, and the poetry of Ariosto.

The "Malmantile raquistato" di Perlone Zipole (the anagram of Lorenzo Lippi) was at last completed; and long before its publication, the MS. was so eagerly sought after, and so rapturously applauded, that its success was unprecedented. It became even more the fashion in France and in England, than in Italy, where its satire was too severely felt not to raise against its author a host of critics and of enemies.† When Lorenzo Panteatichè was presented to Louis XIV., his pompous majesty *rubbed up* his Italian, learnt at the feet of the Mancini, to say something civil of *Il Malmantile* to the reverend traveller, and addressed him with "Signore Abate, io sto legendo il vostro grazioso Malmantile." And the melancholy Charles I. of England received the same personage with the MS. of the *Malmantile* lying open on his table, and his finger pointing to its *title-page*. The allusions, however, of this once fashionable poem are too local to perpetuate its interest; and the antique Tuscanisms, in which it abounds, are now so wholly gone by, that it is not read with much amusement and facility even in Italy, or by the Tuscans themselves.

The aid which Lippi received from the higher genius of Salvator was not confined to his literary pursuits. His

the adaptation of the proverbs to its conceits was so humorous, that it could not be read without laughter.

* The simple Minucci, the friend of Rosa, and the commentator on Lippi, enters in his insipid tittle-tattle ("insipide chiaccherie," as modern writers term his notes) into a grave discussion on these nursery tales, and gives a whole chapter to "The little old man's alive," and to the well-known game,

Becci calla, calla, calla,
Quanti corni ha la cavalla?—

or "Buck, buck, how many horns do I hold up?" a game mentioned, be it recorded *en passant*, in Petronius Arbiter.

† Lippi's sole successful rivals were, Francesco Bracciolino, author of "Lo Scherno degli Dei," and Alessandro Tassoni, author of the well-known *Secchia Rapita*.

"Flight into Egypt" owes to the good-natured assistance of Rosa's pencil, that it was ever finished to contribute to the fame of its author. It happened that Rosa, in one of those fits of idleness to which even his strenuous spirit was occasionally liable, flung down his pencil, and sallied forth to communicate the infection of his *far niente* to his friend Lippi. On entering his studio, however, he found him labouring with great impetuosity on the back-ground of his picture; but in such sullen vehemence, or in such evident ill-humour, that Salvator demanded, "Che fai, amico?"—"What am I about?" said Lippi; "I am going mad with vexation. Here is one of my best pictures ruined; I am under a spell, and cannot even draw the branch of a tree, or a tuft of herbage."

"Signore Dio!" exclaimed Rosa, twisting the palette off his friend's thumb, "what colours are here?" and scraping them off, and gently pushing away Lippi, he took his place, murmuring, "Let me see! who knows but I may help you out of the scrape."*

Half in jest, and half in earnest, he began to touch and retouch, and change, till nightfall found him at the easel finishing one of the best back-ground landscapes he ever painted. All Florence came the next day to look at this *chef-d'œuvre*, and the first artists of the age took it as a study.

A few days afterwards, Salvator calling upon Lippi, found him preparing a canvas, while Malatesti read aloud to him and Ludovico Seranai the astronomer, the MS. of his poem of the Sphynx. Salvator, with a noiseless step, took his seat in an old gothic window, and placing himself in a listening attitude, with a bright light falling through stained glass upon his fine head, produced a splendid study, of which

* Rosa's confidence in his powers was as frankly confessed as it was justified by success. Happening one day to be found by a friend in Florence in the act of modulating on a very indifferent old harpsichord, he was asked, how he could keep such an instrument in his house? "Why," said his friend, "it is not worth a scudo."—"I will lay you what you please," said Salvator, "that it shall be worth a thousand before you see it again." A bet was made, and Rosa immediately painted a landscape with figures on the lid, which not only was sold for a thousand scudi, but was esteemed a "capo d'opera." On one end of the harpsichord he also painted a skull and music books. Both these pictures were exhibited in the year, 1823, at the British Institution.

Lippi, without a word of his intention, availed himself: and he executed, with incredible rapidity, the finest picture of Salvator that was ever painted. Several copies of it were taken with Lippi's permission, and Ludovico Seranai purchased the original at a considerable price. "In this picture Salvator is dressed in a cloth habit, with richly slashed sleeves, turnovers, and a collar. It is only a head and bust, and the eyes are looking towards the spectator."*

While the character of Salvator stood as high in public opinion for its unblemished probity, as it was singular in such times for its stern independence—while his associates were chosen among the most refined, and his friends among the most intelligent classes of society, there was yet one vulnerable point about him, which the truth of biographical story will not permit to be glanced over, but which the sex of the biographer renders it perilous to touch on.

The master-frailty of Salvator's life was that, which the world as readily pardons in one sex, as it condemns in the other;—a venial sin in all countries whose political and religious institutions are unfavourable to the virtues essential to domestic happiness. To enter into details of the amatory adventures of one, whose enterprising spirit in love and in politics, in the tower of Masaniello and the saloons of Rome and Florence, was equally audacious, would, to say the least, be an ill-judged accuracy. That the gallantry of Salvator furnished his enemies with the ground-work of those calumnies, which stamped on him the reputation of a libertine, cannot be denied. But if, in

"His morn and liquid dew of youth,"

he had "fatto come tanti altri," "sinned like so many others," it is at least some extenuation of his offence, that he never lent the spell of his genius to the errors of his example. With the exception of a few short erotic poems, which have all the purity, if not all the poetry, of Petrarch, his works make no allusion to his loves; and neither record the amatory triumphs of his youth, nor the feeble contrition of his decline. He evidently indeed scorned the common

* Baldinucci says of it, "era tanto bello e somigliante, che poi ne furono fatti assai copie, una delle quale si conservo appresso da me per memoria del Rosa."—"It was so beautiful and so like, that many copies of it were afterwards made, one of which I keep in my possession in memory of Salvator."

trick of drawing the world's attention to his productions, by rendering them subservient to its grosser appetites, and to its own egotism; and, blushing to find *that* fame which so many have made their proudest boast, he seems to have been one who

"Comblé de faveurs,
Sache les goûter——et les taire."

That epoch in the life of man was now, however, rapidly arriving, when the senses, less vagrant and prompt to kindle than in youth, become concentrated: and when the passions, sobered to a capacity for fixed and settled affection, call for some suitable object to receive their permanent and exclusive devotion. Salvator had already begun to feel this truth; and he ought to have married. But when urged to enter into matrimonial engagements, he pleaded reasons for rejecting the counsels of his friends, which, though by a strange perversion of the moral sense, founded in a rigid feeling of delicacy and sentimental fastidiousness, led him in the end to act in a manner but little consonant with the dictates of either. The demoralized state of Italian society, at that particular period, made over the virtue of chastity exclusively to religious recluses and monastic devotees; and while one sex professed the most open libertinism, the other was divided into nuns and concubines. Salvator, with some of that Spanish jealousy then inherent in the Neapolitans of all classes, was averse from forming any tie which might link him for life to the possible frailty of the "thing he loved;" and in his sore susceptibility of that ridicule which he had himself lavished on husbands, by necessity "very, very, very kind, indeed," he forebore to enroll himself in their order. In his times, as in the present, and in those countries in which celibacy is consecrated by the religion of the land, human frailty has found its account in winking at a custom, whose observance was in full force in Italy during the seventeenth century. A fair female domestic, with the title of *governante*, was then an universal appendage in the establishment of the unmarried, whether clerical or laic: and even the Vatican was not exempt from such an arrangement.

While Innocent X. consigned the keys of St. Peter to the keeping of Donna Olympia, it gave but little offence to public morals that Salvator consigned his to the fair hands

of a beautiful Florentine girl, whom this connexion has rendered celebrated by the name of La Signora Lucrezia!

The introduction of Salvator to "La Donna di bello aspetto" was connected with his art. Lucrezia, who, though poor, was a person of some education and respectability, had been induced to sit as the original of some of Salvator's nymphs, saints, and Pythonesses, and to become his model, without any disparagement to her modesty or discretion: for Salvator had fallen, with a puritanical severity, upon the prurient representations even of the first masters (and, above all, on his own favourite's ALBANO); and this circumstance rendered him infinitely cautious to make his own works examples of that decency he so strenuously preached to others. "In respect to this branch of his art," says Passeri, "in which a truly *Christian painter* should be most careful, he was a most rigorous observer;* avoiding all indelicacy, or whatever might inspire it, and attending to this with his usual modesty, even in his picture which represents the allurements of Phryne and the continence of Xenocrates: for, in defiance of the necessities of the story, he has completely veiled her, and scarcely left more than a part of the left arm naked."†

From simply considering the young Lucrezia as a fine model, with the same coldness with which Pygmalion first watched the progress of his own statue, Salvator, like the Greek sculptor, soon sighed to animate the forms he gazed on, with that soul which passion only gives—and, too soon, succeeded! The account given of their connexion, by the reverend father Passeri, ("uomo di soda pietà,"‡ says a modern biographer,) though brief, is curious, as coming from a priest; and it is highly illustrative of the manners of the age. "While in Florence," says the Padre, "Salvator entered into an intimate friendship with a lady of great beauty, whom he had in the first instance taken as his model, and who afterwards became his constant companion

* "Rigorosissimo custode" are Passeri's words.

† The picture here alluded to is now in the collection of the Earl of Besborough.

‡ "*A man of confirmed piety.*" Passeri, though a painter, was a priest, celebrated mass, and was promoted to the station of a vicar choral in the collegiate church of Santa Maria in Vico Lato, by his patron, Cardinal Alluri. Passeri retired to a sort of monastic cell, where he lived and died like a hermit, in 1679, having survived his friend Salvator but seven years.

and solace, though not always laudably or innocently so. But as his lady loved him much, and was full of good qualities, he resolved never to abandon her; nor did either ever after think of parting from the other."

When, therefore, Lucrezia took her place in the domestic establishment of Salvator Rosa, with the title of "Sua Governante," though his graver friends might have lamented the nature of the connexion, his guests paid her all that respect, which in free countries is reserved exclusively for the "wedded dame;" and Salvator himself offered her that sort of guarded attention, which men whose passions and moral sense are at variance, are wont to pay to the object which occasions the struggle.*

If Lucrezia proved herself unworthy of her chaste name, by yielding to the seductions of one of the most seducing men of the age, it is some extenuation of her fault, that she was not "won, unwoo'd," nor was she ever faithless to him, who had rendered her untrue to herself; for Salvator styles her "*La mia donna crudel*,"† and seems to have always treated her as the wife of a left-handed marriage:—a sort of union which still exists on the continent, and of which royalty avails itself, when state-policy is at variance with the policy of the heart. Her name is rarely omitted in his letters, and always respectfully mentioned; and she accompanied him in all his visits, not only to the villas of his friends the illustrious Maffei, but to the houses of the most respectable ecclesiastics.

* At the distance of sixteen years from this epoch, Salvator, writing to his friend the Abbate Ricciardi, says: "Believe that nothing in my memory is so vital and tenacious as my sense of your affection and of the devotion which I owe Lucrezia."—*Letters of Salvator Rosa*.

† A sonnet said to be addressed to Lorenzo Lippi by Salvator Rosa, on his painting a portrait of the Signora Lucrezia, begins thus,

"Lippi se bene hai nell' tue linee impressa
La mia Donna crudel, che viva e spira;
 Onde dice ciascun, che la rimira
 Questa e la Dea d'amore e viva è desta."

The descendants of Salvator Rosa, lately residing in Rome, possess a portrait, which they assert to be that of Lucrezia. "It is," (says a gentleman who has seen it) "in a woeiful condition, far from interesting, and not to be ascribed to Salvator, as the head is covered with a *black hood*—a head-dress not in fashion in the time of Lucrezia, as all the portraits of that age prove. The picture is most probably not hers."

The conduct of Salvator in this instance, even with reference to the age and country in which he lived, was sufficiently indefensible (as violating the best interests and institutions of society) to satisfy the malice of his enemies, and to grieve the hearts of his friends. But his blameable frailty was exaggerated, by the calumny of party spirit, into heartless and systematic profligacy; and the darkest error of his life,* which he sought to redeem by all the means of reparation in his power, was made the basis of misrepresentations equally foreign to his taste and character, and in direct contradiction to all that his contemporary biographers have left on record, both of his life and death. The party, however, which fell upon his reputation and his memory, with all the pertinacious acrimony of a modern English Vice-Society, had not one word of reproof to direct against the Royal Harems of Whitehall and Versailles; and still less for the Princesses of the Vatican, as the favourite ladies of Innocent X. were openly denominated in Rome. They saw no scandal in the amatory confessions of Cardinal de Retz † (who has set off his amusing memoirs by episodes of his own loves, and those of his brother cardinals), but keeping all their moral vituperation for the plebeian author of "Regulus" and the "Babilonia," prudently judged,

"That, in the Captain, but a choleric word,
Which in the Soldier was foul blasphemy."

It is no small proof of the intensity of his devotion to Lucrezia, if not of its purity, that from the period of her becoming an inmate of his house, Salvator appears gradually to have withdrawn from that perpetual round of gay and dissipated society, into which his social talents had

* Salvator and Lucrezia were married at Rome by the reverend Father Francesco Baldovino (the intimate friend of Salvator), but too late to save the reputation of the fair Lucrezia, or to redeem the frailty of her lover. The *bon-mots* attributed to Salvator on this subject, even on his death-bed, were the fabrication of his enemies long after that event occurred, for the purpose of throwing an odium on his satires (which attacked so many interests and prejudices), by blasting the memory of their author. The account of his last moments by his spiritual attendant, Baldovino, and his own life and works, are the best refutation of calumnies which were first published forty-eight years after he had descended to the grave.

† "Le Cardinal de Retz," says Voltaire, "parle de ses amours avec autant de vérité, que de ceux du Cardinal de Richelieu."

hitherto plunged him; and even the light and honourable bondage in which he was held by the Court of the Medici became so insupportable, that he took the resolution of throwing up his engagements, and retiring altogether from Florence. To soften down this self-dismissal to the Grand Duke and his brothers, Salvator pleaded his having accepted an invitation from his dear friends the Counts Ugo and Giulio Maffei, who had long pressed him to pass an indefinite time in their palace in the ancient Etruscan city of Volterra, and at their two beautiful villas in its neighbourhood, Monte Ruffoli and Barbajana, for the purpose of completing and compiling his literary productions. The Princes de' Medici, if they regretted, did not resent the voluntary retreat of Salvator; while he, having once snapt asunder the "dorate catene della corte," "never," says Baldinucci,* "would again subject his spirit to dependence for any pecuniary recompense which any potentate in the world could bestow on him: although he was solicited by some with the most pressing instances: and it was his only boast to have so managed, that he could now live to himself and for his own pursuits, without any intrusion from others, and liberated from the gilded chains of a court."

Salvator, in accepting the hospitable invitation of his illustrious friends, for himself and his family, was governed by the favourite *senza suggestione* of Italian enjoyment; and it was agreed that the taste, feeling, or caprice of the eccentric guest of the Maffei, was alone to limit or extend the length of his visit.

The ancient city of Volterra, crowning a bold acclivity, stands at about twenty miles distance from Florence. Its mouldering walls, erected ere Rome was dreamed of, its Etruscan monuments and many domes and spires, reflected in the beautiful river Era, which flows at its base, and the dark woods, which, from the summit of the surrounding hills, spread their rich masses to the very verge of the laughing champaign vales, all contributed to render this paradise an appropriate residence for one who was a wor-

* "Non volle mai più soggettarsi la libertà dell' anima sua per provvisioni di qual si fosse potentate del mondo; benchè con pressantissime istanze ne fosse sollicitato; ed era l' unico vanto suo di essersi condotto di vivere a sé stesso, e ai propri studi, senza alcuno di quelle noje d' altrui che sogliono recare le dorate catene della corte."—*Baldinucci*.

shipper of Nature in all her aspects. Salvator had frequently fled to these fair Etruscan shades, from the gaieties of Florence, sometimes in moods of fitful melancholy, sometimes to study landscape under another view than that presented to him among the terrible sublimities of the Abruzzi. "And truly it was a site," says Baldinucci, "well worthy of his fine and picturesque genius. Rocks, mountains, torrents, masses of shade and vistas of brightness,—all that is most pictorial, and is scattered over the most distant regions,—nature had here concentrated; and here Salvator may have indulged, even to surfeit, his philosophical humour, and nourished those profound speculations which he afterwards wove into poetical compositions." It was here that (according to Passeri also) he took the scenery of his great Bacchanalian piece, and of several of his landscapes for the palace Pitti, "some of which," says a modern French writer, "have all the glow and softness of Claude Lorraine."

It was here too, on the very spot where Catiline fought and fell, (and

"Nothing in his life
Became him like his leaving it,")

that Salvator (himself no stranger to the dark councils of conspiracy) first drew in the elements, and conceived the idea, of the noblest of all his works—his "Catiline Conspiracy."*

That longing after solitude which accompanied Salvator from the cradle to the tomb, and from which his talents and ambition had hitherto withdrawn him, was now gratified to its fullest bent. The Maffei, who passed the greater part of their winters at Florence, left him the undisputed master of his time and occupations, in their vast palace at Volterra, and in their villas in its neighbourhood. It was during this period that he gave himself up almost exclusively to deep

* It is a curious fact, that accident should have conducted *another* conspirator to the same spot, almost at the same time. For the author of "*La Conspiration de Fiesque*," Cardinal de Retz, the principal instigator of the Fronde, being received in his flight to Rome by the Grand Duke de' Medici, observes; "*Le Signor Annibal me mena dans une maison qui est sous Volterra, qui s'appelle l'Hospitalità, et qui est batie sur le champ où Catilina fut tué; elle était autrefois au grand Laurent de Medicis.*"—*Memoires de Retz*. Salvator must have been a resident at Volterra at the very time that his fugitive Eminence passed a few days at the *Hospitalità*.

study, and to the cultivation of his poetical talents. Here he first reduced to order, corrected, and transcribed, all his satires, (with the exception of his *L' Invidia*), for the purpose of their publication; and here he first read them consecutively to the literary friends who from time to time came to visit him from Florence:—not, however, with all the charm of his musical recitation, as when he gave them *al improvviso* at Rome and at Florence; but with the sobriety and timidity of one about to avail himself of the judgment of the judicious few, before he ventured to appear before the tribunal of the mighty many.

The person from whose criticisms upon these occasions he made no appeal, was the celebrated experimentalist Redi, who, says a French writer, “fit une révolution dans la medecine et sût si bien interroger la Nature.” When Redi pointed out to Salvator, in the course of his readings, the frequent Neapolitanisms, or rather the anti-Tuscanisms, which disfigured his work, he instantly struck them out; and, at Redi’s suggestion, he endeavoured to moderate the impetuous ardour with which he wrote, and to give more method and unity to the bold and wild productions which flowed from his copious imagination with a Pythian vehemence. “I have myself,” says Baldinucci, “a volume of his (Salvator’s) by me now, in which he entered his verses without rule or order, and which bears testimony to the impatient manner in which he noted down the ‘*velocissime effusioni*’ (‘most rapid effusions’) of his intellect.” Baldinucci observes, “that many of these fragments were in blank verse (*versi sciolti*), and were *conceits which Rosa afterwards incorporated in his Satires.*”

Although the life of Salvator was now rather that of a man of letters than a painter, he was so far from abandoning his art, that he regularly devoted a few hours of every day to its pursuit; and he painted successively, for his illustrious hosts, his “Sacrifice of Abel,” and his “Queen Esther,” in which it is traditionally said, that the portrait of Lucrezia is preserved. He also painted, as a present for Ugo Maffei, the fine portrait of himself (Salvator) which now hangs in the Royal Gallery at Florence; and which is remarkable as being (in all probability) the foundation-picture of that collection of the portraits of painters which owes its existence to Cardinal Leopold de’ Medici. Ugo

Maffei had given the portrait of Salvator to the Cardinal, who shortly after invited all the painters in Europe to send in their own portraits; and thus began one of the most interesting departments of the most interesting gallery in the world. It was occasionally the custom of Salvator, at this period, to leave even the retirement of the Maffei palace at Volterra, for the still deeper solitudes of the deserted villa of Barbajana; and it was upon these occasions that he was wont to relieve the fatigues of deep and pensive meditation, by sketching little historical subjects on the walls of the rooms, done as it were on scraps of paper, hung up by a nail or peg. Although these capricious trifles were only composed in black and white, yet so powerful was their relief, and so finely managed their lights and shadows, that they appeared to the eye of the spectator to be dropping from the walls; and many a hand was stretched out to rescue fragments so precious from the accidents which apparently threatened their destruction.

The placid retirement and studious solitude of Salvator, though unreservedly indulged for a part of the year, were agreeably interrupted during the seasons of the Carnival and of the Villeggiatura, which the Maffei always spent in Volterra and their Etruscan villa. The carnival was there celebrated with its wonted gaities and festivities. Comedies were acted at the Palazzo Maffei, and Salvator reappeared on the scene in the new character of Pattaca, a shrewd varlet, who had become manager of a dramatic company.

The carnival over, and the villeggiatura begun, Salvator (previously stipulating for his dear independence, and for privacy during a certain period of the day,) accompanied the circle which composed the elegant society of the Monte Ruffoli. On these occasions he wholly laid aside his pencils, and, when not in society, devoted himself to literary pursuits. "The first hours of the morning," says one of his biographers, "were given to the chase; and the interval, between his return and dinner, was devoted to study and composition." It was, however, at the supper, which followed these dinners, at which the most distinguished literati of Florence assembled, that the hours fled on golden wings. It was there that Salvator's spirits took their brightest tone, and his morning studies never failed to afford him

some pleasant text, producing an animated and prolonged discussion, more noted, it is said, for its "mirabile giocondità," ("extraordinary hilarity,") than for its gravity or learning.

Thus at intervals enjoying the society of the elegant and the enlightened, retired from the cares and cabals of the world he always despised, secluded in scenes of beauty with one he loved "not wisely, but too well," Salvator might be supposed to have united all the views, and gratified all the tastes, of the poet, philosopher, and lover. This does not, however, appear to have been the fact: Florence had been the exile's refuge—Volterra was his asylum; and both were connected with the unpleasant feelings which accompany a sense of banishment and of dependence. Besides, he was "nel mezzo del cammin' dell' nostra vita,"* in the noon of life's brief day, and he turned anxiously towards some resting-place, which he might call by the blessed name of home. He was also a father; for his eldest son Rosalvo was born about this time, and he must have felt in this increase of family, an impediment to his remaining a domesticated guest, even with his most intimate friend.†

To a man of his intellect and generalized views, a provincial capital like Florence was but ill adapted for a permanent residence. The perpetual interference of the petty sovereigns of such petty states with their enslaved subjects, might in the end have proved a source of endless disquietude to one, who, as an artist, either harassed by their patronage, or injured by their neglect, would have been held particularly subject to their dictation and their caprice. He had probably not forgotten the fate of Benvenuto Cellini, the unfortunate protégé of Cosmo de' Medici; and he was well aware, that, as a casual visitor, he enjoyed advantages in Florence, which, as a permanent resident, he could never hope to preserve. He had, besides, evidently got weary of that academic pedantry which prevailed in its literary circles; and having already consigned the Della Crusca and its "Infarinati" to eternal ridicule in stanzas which were now in everybody's mouth, he had laid the

* Dante.

† In one of his letters to Ricciardi after his arrival in Rome, he talks with triumph of being restored to his pristine liberty. "Posso dire d'essere restituito alla mia pristina libertà."

foundation of future literary persecutions from an incorporated society of learned blockheads, who were still flushed with the triumphs won by their ridiculous predecessors, over one of the greatest poets Italy had ever produced,—a poet, who, like Salvator, was a Neapolitan.

He resolved therefore on leaving Florence. There was but one city in Italy, which his habits and tastes led him to select for a permanent residence ; and that city was Rome. Early associations, early friendships, early triumphs, were all connected with that still great capital of the arts ; and it is more than probable, that many of his Roman friends had paved the way for his return. The Ghigi family were all-powerful. Some of his old opponents in the Conclave, who had fancied that they had found a place in “La Fortuna,” were dead : and time and accident had done their usual work of devastation, and removed other impediments to his return. From the great masters then resident in Rome, he may have supposed that he had little to apprehend. Claude Lorraine was declining into the vale of years, though not declining in vogue. Gaspar Poussin was prematurely wearing out by physical infirmities, brought on by his immoderate passion for field sports ; and Nicolas Poussin was becoming old and infirm. Even Bernini, who had found, like other despots, that the abuse of power eventually turns against itself, had “fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf,” and becoming, as one of his biographers styles it, “the victim of a terrible conspiracy,” was reduced to inventing gewgaw carriages for the eccentric Queen Christina of Sweden, whose restless, wandering spirit had then led her to the Court of Rome. Pietro da Cortona and Carlo Maratti were indeed still in their prime ; but *they* were friends whom Salvator was glad to meet, and rivals he had no cause to fear.

CHAPTER IX.

1652—1673.

SALVATOR returned to Florence in order to bid farewell to the friends who had contributed to the happiness of those years he had enjoyed there ; and his departure from that

capital for Rome was marked by every public testimony of respect, and every private mark of regret, that could flatter his love of glory, or gratify his affections.*

Elegies, sonnets, and poetical adieus, ("*all collected by me,*" says that arch-collector of all things, Baldinucci,) flowed in from all quarters. The names of the Duc di Salviatti, of the mathematician Torricelli, of Cardinal Bandinelli, and the Abate Ricciardi, are distinguished among the elegiac eulogists, who recorded in Tuscan verse the loss which the society of Florence sustained, by the departure of one of its most brilliant and accomplished members. The deep impressions of tenderness and regret which Salvator carried away with him from Florence, and his occasional visits during the remainder of his life to his friends Minucci, Ricciardi, and Maffei, prove, that if Rome was the object of his professional ambition, Tuscany, with the beauty of her scenes and the amenity of her inhabitants, was the rallying point of his most gracious recollections!

Although the assignments of the Court had been most liberal, and his gains immense, he confessed in confidence, to Baldinucci and others, that he carried with him to Rome but a small sum of money. For the generosity with which he had assisted in their pecuniary embarrassments, not only his friends, but upon several occasions his known enemies,† was as little favourable to accumulation, as his professed principles, which made him an open and avowed contemner of wealth, were inimical to every sordid consideration. Still, however, while preaching a stoical philosophy, and in some instances practising it, (by one of those contrarieties

* Baldinucci observes, that when Salvator left Florence for Rome, it was "con sommo e generale dispiacere degli amici"—"to the great regret of his friends," who could not, he declares, take leave of him without tears.

† "In questo però era sì poco fortunato, che si trovò bene spesso d' avere impegnato gli atti della propria beneficenza aprò de' persone che, scordatesi del beneficio, occuparavano poi luogo de' maggior anzi fra i di lui più giurati nemici e persecutori, e furono quegli stessi che più di ogni altro preferò a biasimare le belle opere sue, tanto in pittura, che in poesia."—*Baldinucci*.

¹ In this instance he was so little lucky, that he frequently found he had lavished his acts of beneficence upon persons, who, forgetful of his generosity, ranged themselves among his bitterest enemies and persecutors, and who, above all others, were ever ready to condemn his works, both pictorial and poetical.

which chequer human character, and render the conduct of the wisest at best but

“A tangled web of good and ill together,”)

Salvator was fond of splendid and ostentatious display. He courted admiration from whatever source she could be obtained, and even sought her by means to which the frivolous and the vain are supposed alone to resort. He is described therefore as now returning to that Rome from which he had made so perilous and furtive an escape, in a showy and pompous equipage, with “servants in rich liveries, armed with silver-hafted swords, and otherwise well-accounted.” The beautiful Lucrezia as “sua Governante” accompanied him, and the little Rosalvo gave no scandal in a society where the institutions of religion substitute licence for legitimate indulgence, and prove that nature is never violated with impunity. Immediately on his arrival in Rome, Salvator fixed upon one of the loveliest of her hills for his residence, and purchased a handsome house upon the Monte Pincio,* on the Piazza della Trinità del Monte; “which,” says Pascoli,† “he furnished with noble and rich furniture, establishing himself on a great scale and in a lordly manner.” A site more favourable than the Pincio for a man of Salvator’s taste and genius could scarcely be imagined, commanding within the scope of its vast prospect, views at once picturesque and splendid, monuments of the most important events in the history of man—the Capitol and Campus Martius! the Groves of the Quirinal, and the Cupola of St. Peter’s! the ruined palaces of the Cæsars, and the sumptuous villas of the sons of the reigning church! Such was then, as now, the range of unrivalled objects which the Pincio commanded; but the noble terrace smoothed over its acclivities, which recalled the memory of Aurelian and the feats of Belisarius, presented at that period a far different aspect from that which it now offers. Everything in this enchanting site was then fresh and splendid; the halls of the Villa Medici, which at present only echo to the

* Passeri, who frequently visited at Rosa’s house, says expressly, that Salvator lived in the Piazza della Trinità, nella Piazza d’ Spagna, which must mean directly *over* the Piazza d’ Spagna.

† “Di nobili e ricchi arnesi; e trattendosi alla grande, e da signore.”—*Pascoli*.

steps of a few French students or English travellers, were then the bustling and splendid residence of the old intriguing Cardinal Carlo de' Medici, called the "Cardinal of Tuscany," whose followers and faction were perpetually coming to and fro, mingling their showy uniforms and liveries with the sober vestments of the neighbouring monks of the Convent della Trinità! The delicious groves and gardens of the Villa Medici then covered more than two English miles,* and amidst cypress shades and shrubberies, watered by clear springs and reflected in translucent fountains, stood exposed to public gaze all that now forms the most precious treasures of the Florentine gallery—the Niobe! the Wrestlers! the Apollino! the Vase! and, above all, the *Venus of Venuses*!† which has derived its distinguishing appellation from these gardens, of which she was long the boast and ornament. In emerging from the shady bowers and the pleasant terraces of the Villa Medici, the "glorious fabrick," the "elysium of delight," as Evelyn calls the Villa Borghese, burst upon the eye, and allured the steps to its blooming Paradise! Not then, as now, did the voluptuous dwelling of the Borghese exhibit its luxurious banquetting hall and magnificent porticoes! Neglect had not *then* faded the brilliant tints of its frescoed pavilions, suffered its pure fountains to mantle, or its living springs to dry! Its gardens were not then weedy wildernesses, nor its saloons silent as the tomb! In the pleasurable retreat of the powerful Cardinal Borghese of that day, everything spoke the "pomp and circumstance" which the frankly voluptuous sons of the church gloried in displaying with rival splendour! There was nothing of that unsocial self-centred enjoyment, of that sly, sullen, and sober sen-

* The Villa Medici was erected in 1550, by Cardinal Ricci di Monte Pulciano, and was purchased by the Cardinal Alexander Medici, afterwards Pope Leo XI. The Cardinals of Tuscany continued to reside in it until the year 1666, when it was purchased by the French government under Louis XIV., as an academy of the fine arts and a school for the young students of the French nation.

† When Evelyn visited Rome in 1644, three years before Salvator went to Naples to join Falcone's party, the Niobe group was still standing in the open air. "Here is also a low balustrade with white marble, covered over with natural shrubs, ivy, and other perennial greens, divers statues and heads being placed as in niches; at a little distance are those famed statues of Niobe and her family, in all fifteen," &c.—*Evelyn*, vol. i. pp. 97-8. What a neighbourhood for Salvator Rosa!

suality, which mark the private and indolent life of the prelates of a more modern sect, and add the vices of simulation and selfishness to the sumptuous frailties of the demigods of the Conclave. With them external magnificence was coupled with personal enjoyment. Their habits and tastes were still in some coincidence with the arts, and forwarded the development of the national genius: and if their cooks and gardeners were inferior to those of their reformed brethren in our own days, their porticoes and galleries exhibit to posterity far nobler monuments of taste and liberality, than those which future generations may discover in the *snug eating parlours* of the old diocesan palaces of another but an equally wealthy hierarchy. The Monte Pincio, however, was inhabited in the middle of the seventeenth century by personages more remarkable than princes and prelates, and exhibited edifices which, though of smaller pretension, were not less interesting than its palaces and convents. The pictorial genius of Rome has, at various epochs, chosen the Pincio as its temporary or final residence; and the house selected by Salvator Rosa to live and die in, stood nearly opposite to that salient angle in the Piazza della Trinità, which is formed by the elegant mansion raised by Federico Zuccherò, and still enriched by his frescoes; and it was situated between the houses of N. Poussin and Claude Lorraine*—a proof of the good understanding which must have existed between these great masters, ere Salvator fixed upon so close a community for his permanent residence and last home.

In the arrangements of his new residence, Salvator displayed all his characteristic peculiarities: still sheltering his natural love of elegant splendour under his respect for the art. His gallery, decorated by some of his finest pictures, which he had brought from Florence, shone with rich gilding and curious carvings, conspicuous on the massive

* The façades of all these houses have been, I am told, thrown down and rebuilt; and it would now be impossible to guess at their original dimensions. Such subjects have no interest for the modern Romans, of which the filthy and neglected state of the residence of Cola Rienzi (the most singular specimen extant of the domestic architecture of the middle ages) is a proof; and in this instance, as in every other relative to the subject of this work, I found it impossible to obtain any information I could depend upon from those immediately on the spot.

frames in which his precious works were enshrined ; * vessels of solid silver (presents from his admirers) were carelessly displayed ; and all the furniture of this little temple of the arts was of suitable splendour ; while his own saloon where he received his friends in private intimacy, continued the tub of Diogenes, and retained all the frugal simplicity which distinguished the house of the young and indigent Rosa of the Via Babbuina in less prosperous times.

On the return of Salvator to Rome, and his immediate establishment on the Pincio, those that remained of his old friends rallied round him ; but he soon found, that if time and death had thinned the ranks of his ancient enemies,

“ Les envieux meurent, mais non pas l'Envie.”

Calumny met him at the gates of Rome, defamation was at “its dirty work again,” and professional envy, sheltering itself under party feeling, attacked the principles and opinions of a man, whose genius and successes were the true causes of the persecutions he endured. According to Balducci and Passeri, it was in vain that “orders poured in upon him from divers parts of the world.” He had still to struggle at home against his most implacable enemies, ignorance and envy.†

To find in the spot which for the sake of early impressions and long-formed ties he had chosen as his last home, envy, hatred, and opposition, filled the susceptible bosom of Salvator with bitterness ; and he gave himself up for a time to the most gloomy feelings. “He ran over in his mind,” says Pascoli, “all the injustices he had from the beginning endured, all the wrongs that had from time to time been heaped on him, and had opened fresh wounds in his heart ; ‡ and he finally determined to take a signal vengeance.

* Salvator, like the great masters of a preceding age, himself made the designs for the frames which inclosed his own works.

In disposing of his pictures, he always refused to sell the frames, which remained on the walls of his gallery. When accused by his friends of lavishing unnecessarily large sums of money on what was merely ornamental, he was wont with a smile to reply from Ariosto,

“ Molto cresce uno belta, una bel manto.”

† “ Ai più implacabili nemici, cioè all' ignoranza ed all' invidia.”—*Balducci*.

‡ “ Pungentissime colpe nel cuore,” is Pascoli's strong expression.

With this view he not only put a price upon his works excessive beyond all purchase, but he finally forbore selling them at all, contemning the offers he received, and even treating with hauteur the individuals who made them; thus giving the last blow* to the hopes of those who still sought to enrich their collection by the works of the artist, while they abandoned the man to the persecutions of his enemies. He continued, however, to exhibit his noble productions at all public exhibitions, and then withdrew them to his own gallery, declaring that his pictures were now executed for himself alone.

Having thus frequently sharpened desire, by exciting admiration and then disappointing it, "he for a time," says Pascoli, "held the wishes of the public in suspense." His necessities, however, obliged him to abate something of what he himself terms "his infernal pride." He again condescended to receive and to execute orders; but it appears that he did so at no vulgar behest, for he now worked chiefly for princes and prelates; and his pictures became diplomatic bribes between intriguing cabinets, or royal presents from king to king.

While Carlo Maratti was working with daily assiduity in the magnificent gallery of the most interesting palace in Rome (the Colonna), condescending to paint cupids and roses on fragile mirrors (which, however, still decorate walls dismantled of nobler and more lasting ornaments), Salvator was employed by the Constable Colonna in painting historical pictures for the same gallery, and even affected to barter compliments with the puissant prince. By more than *one* ill-timed but generous present to a man so greatly his superior in wealth and rank, he unconsciously laid the foundation of a calumny against his noted disinterestedness, which, inconsistent as it is, still stamps his liberal character with one solitary incident of ridicule, or of avarice. "The Constable Colonna," says a modern retailer of pictorial anecdotes, "sent a purse of gold to Salvator Rosa on receiving one of his beautiful landscapes. The painter, not to be outdone in generosity, sent the prince another picture as a present, which the prince insisted on remunerating with another purse; another present and another purse

* "Per dar maggior martello alle lor brame."

followed; and this struggle between generosity and liberality continued to the tune of many other pictures and presents, until the prince, finding himself a loser by the contest, sent Salvator two purses, with the assurance that he gave in, "et lui céda le champ de bataille." The pictures painted at this time for the Constable Colonna were, "Mercury and the Peasant," "Moses found by Pharaoh's daughter,"* the two sublime St. Johns, and the landscapes which gave rise to the calumnious anecdote above recited.

About this time he is also said to have painted his "Jonas preaching at Nineveh," for the King of Denmark, which was followed by two great pictures for the Venetian ambassador then at Rome. Shortly after, Monsignore Corsini, being chosen Nuncio from the Court of Rome to Louis XIV., "and it having been duly considered what would be the most acceptable offering to lay at the King's feet, it was decided in favour of a work to be executed by Salvator Rosa." This distinction coming at a moment when this *Lion of the art* was stung to the quick by the host of venomous insects that had fastened on him, must have been most gracious: Salvator, indeed, in mentioning the subject to Ricciardi, expresses, with an almost childish naïveté, his sense of the flattering preference given him over all the painters of Rome, at a moment when the Poussins, Claude Lorraine, Maratti, and Pietro da Cortona, were in the summit of their reputation. Still, for one whose vanity has always been brought in evidence against him, he assigns with infinite modesty as one of the causes of this preference, that "he worked with greater celerity than other artists, and that the prompt departure of the Nuncio left but forty days for the execution of the picture."

"Signor Corsini (he writes) having been chosen Nuncio to the Court of France, after some consideration as to the offering to be made to the King, it was last week resolved, that it should be a picture of mine; the subject, a great battle-piece, the exact size of my Bacchanals, which you are acquainted with; viz. fourteen palms in length and nine in breadth: and for the execution forty days only are allowed

* The fate of these two pictures is thus detailed by a French writer: "Des Anglais les ont porté en 1800 dans leur patrie, où ils ont été estimés à 84,000 livres."

me. As Monsignor must leave Rome by the end of September, and he was aware that no other painter could have executed his commission in so short a time, especially as it must be painted during the hot month of August, he has shut his eyes to the two hundred doubloons which is the lowest price I would accept. On my part, I most joyfully accept the commission, not only on account of the high price given, but for the high distinction (and it could not be higher) of having a picture of mine selected by preference, as an offering from Rome to a King of France.”*

While employed upon this immortal battle-piece, this poetry of carnage,† he observes to Ricciardi, that “his head was as full of slaughter and uproar, as though it were the head of Alecto herself.” He seems indeed to have been wound up to his highest pitch of excitement by its success: he calls it his “blessed picture,” and observes to his correspondent, “Should it succeed in France as it has done here, (and that I swear to you is as much as any modern picture ever did, not to speak of the old masters,) I shall be satisfied.” All Rome crowded to his house to behold this splendid performance; and that the Spanish Nuncio offered him his own price at the same moment for two pictures to present to the very sovereign against whom Salvator had borne arms, was a curious incident at a time when the loyal academy of San Luca still refused to admit him among its members, and when he found it impossible to procure the painting of a *sopra-porta* for any public edifice in Rome.

Proud as he appears to have been of the high prices which he now received, he seems to have set no further

* Letters of Salvator Rosa.

† This picture (with the Witch of Endor, by the same artist) is esteemed among the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Royal Museum of France in the present day. (1823.) The following description, taken from Taillasson, will give some idea of its merit:—

“Sa grande bataille conservée au Muséum est surtout un ouvrage admirable; une poésie de carnage anime la scène, les ruines d'un palais, une vaste et aride plaine, des montagnes sauvages, le ciel, tous les objets de ce tableau ont un aspect funeste, et semblent n'avoir été faits que pour retentir de cris funèbres. La discorde et la rage y triomphent au milieu des maux qu'elles font, la soif dévorante du sang embrase tous les combattans, et jamais sur un théâtre de carnage les blessures et la mort ne furent présentées plus terribles et plus affreuses.”

value on money,* than as it enabled him to assist his friends in their pecuniary difficulties; and on learning the derangement of his dear friend Ricciardi's circumstances, occasioned by the extravagant conduct of a spendthrift brother, he placed all his recent earnings at his disposal, with an earnestness and cordiality which are not to be mistaken for mere profession. "I am here," he says, "to assist you, and I swear that so long as I am master of one giulio, one half of it shall be yours; so cheer up, and smile misfortune out of countenance. Remember that I am now richer than all the Cræsus and Cæciliï † together; let that suffice, since I am yours truly and sincerely." ‡

It was in vain that the birth of a second son (his favourite Agosto), and the advice of Ricciardi himself, urged Salvator to put some bounds to his generosity and liberal habits of life. He promised fairly, but did not as fairly perform. "At this time," says Pascoli, § "he figured away as the great painter," opening his house to all his friends, who came from all parts to visit him, and among others to Antonio Abbati, who had resided for many years in Germany. This old acquaintance of the poor Salvatoriello of the Chiesa della Morte at Viterbo, was not a little amazed to find his patient and humble auditor of former times, one of the most distinguished geniuses and hospitable Amphitryons of the day; and Pascoli gives a curious picture of the prevailing pedantry of the times, by describing a discourse of Antonio Abbati's at Salvator's dinner-table, on the superior merits of the ancient painters over the moderns, in which he "bestowed all the tediousness" of his erudition on the company. Salvator answered him in his own style, and having overturned all his arguments in favour of antiquity, with more learning than they had been supported, ended with an impromptu epigram in his usual way, which brought the laughers on his side.

* "Ce peintre (Salvator Rosa), extrêmement généreux, travailla plus pour la gloire que pour amasser des richesses."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres*.

† Cæcilius Claudius Isidorus left in his will to his heirs, 4116 slaves, 3600 yokes of oxen, 257,000 small cattle, and 600,000 greater sesterces of silver.—*Plin.* 33, cap. x.

‡ Letters of Salvator Rosa.

§ "Representava egli allora la figura vivamente di gran pittore."

“Signor Abbati mio, non parlo in gioco,
Questo che dato avete, è un gran giudizio,
Ma del giudizio n' avete poco.”*

To all external appearances, the position of Salvator Rosa, both as a painter, a poet, and a distinguished member of the best society, was now eminently prosperous. Wherever he appeared, the finger of curiosity was pointed at him—a gracious circumstance in the life of the ambitious and the vain! From the moment that delicious spring of the Roman climate burst into its sudden bloom, till the intolerable heats and fatal malaria of autumn emptied its public walks and thinned its *corso*, the appearance of Salvator Rosa and his followers on the Monte Pincio, to which he confined his evening walks, never failed to produce a general sensation, and to draw all the professed disciples of the “far niente” from the embowering shades of the gardens of the Villa Medici. The Monte Pincio was then, as now, the fashionable lounge of Rome; but at a period when every nation, class, and profession still preserved its characteristic costume, the Roman Mall exhibited many such fantastic groupings, as in modern times might furnish the genius of masquerade with models equally striking and picturesque.

Among the strolling parties of monks and friars, cardinals and prelates, Roman princesses and English peers, Spanish grandees and French cavaliers, which then crowded the Pincio, there appeared two groups, which may have recalled those of the Portico or the Academy, and which never failed to interest and fix the attention of the beholders. The leader of one of these singular parties was the venerable Nicholas Poussin! The air of antiquity which breathed over all his works seemed to have infected even his person and his features; and his cold, sedate, and passionless countenance,† his measured pace and sober deportment, spoke that phlegmatic temperament and regulated feeling, which had led him to study monuments rather than men, and to declare that the result of all his

* I give the anecdote as it is related by Pascoli; but the impromptu epigram is a parody on his own lines in *La Pittura*, which he puts into the mouth of the hypercritic Biagio, on the subject of Michael Angelo's picture of the Last Judgment.

† “Si scorgeva più la severità che la placidezza.”—*Vita di Nicola Poussino*, Passeri.

experience was "to teach him to live well with all persons." Soberly clad, and sagely accompanied by some learned antiquarian or pious churchman, and by a few of his deferential disciples, he gave out his trite axioms in measured phrase and emphatic accent, lectured rather than conversed, and appeared like one of the peripatetic teachers of the last days of Athenian pedantry and pretension.

In striking contrast to these academic figures, which looked like their own "grandsires cut in alabaster," appeared, never-faillingly, on the Pincio, after sunset,* a group of a different stamp and character, led on by one who, in his flashing eye, mobile brow, and rapid movement—all fire, feeling, and perception—was the very personification of genius itself. This group consisted of Salvator Rosa, gallantly, if not splendidly, habited, and a motley gathering of the learned and the witty, the gay and the grave, who surrounded him. He was constantly accompanied in these walks on the Pincio by the most eminent virtuosi, poets, musicians, and cavaliers in Rome, all anxious to draw him out on a variety of subjects, when air, exercise, the desire of pleasing, and the consciousness of success, had wound him up to his highest pitch of excitement; while many, who could not appreciate, and some who did not approve, were still anxious to be seen in his train, merely that they might have to boast "nos quoque."†

From the Pincio, Salvator Rosa was generally accompanied home by the most distinguished persons both for talent and rank; and while the frugal and penurious Poussin was lighting out some reverend prelate or antiquarian with one sorry taper,‡ Salvator, the prodigal Salvator, was passing the evening in his elegant gallery, in the midst of princes,§ nobles, and men of wit and science, where he

* Passeri, 432.

† "E particolarmente verso la sera." *Passeri*:—who describes his followers as "Letterati, uomini di ingegno, e di bel talento, musici, e cantori della prima classe," p. 432. With respect to the professional musicians, Passeri seems to think that Salvator rather tolerated, than approved, of their society; for, he observes, "he knew what they *weighed*, and only *endured* them for purposes of his own."

‡ See Life of Poussin.

§ "The society at his house was always numerous; consisting of cavaliers, prelates, princes, and I believe that some of the sacred college did not decline going there."—*Passeri*, p. 432.

made new claims on their admiration, both as an artist and as an improvvisatore;—for till within a few years of his death he continued to recite his own poetry, and to sing his own compositions to the harpsichord or lute.

But neither the obsequiousness of the idle, the notice of the great, nor the devotion of his few well-tried friends, could soothe the irritable sensibility* of one, who was kept on the rack by those attacks upon his genius, his works, and his character, which he wanted the strength or vanity to despise, or the prudence to pass over in silent contempt.

Even the names of these calumniators, of whom Salvator and his biographers so bitterly complain, are now unknown; and they who so long possessed the power of torturing living genius, and darkening the mortal days of him whose works still keep his fame in the full freshness of popular admiration, have not themselves maintained even a parasite existence, nor preserved their own perishable reputations, embalmed in the sweet memory of the man they so unsparingly persecuted. But such is the fate of extraordinary talent, and such the price which is paid for that intellectual superiority, which arms against itself all the vanities and all the spleen of grovelling, yet ambitious, mediocrity!

Salvator was scarcely established in Rome, to enjoy the profitless but intoxicating admiration which his social talents always excited, when the cry was raised against his great historical pictures, and with such success, that for a time he received no orders for figure-pieces; while demands poured in for his quadretti, those spirited and graceful little pictures, beyond his power as well as his will to execute. It was under such mortifying circumstances that his temper and equanimity wholly forsook him; and he could no longer restrain his bitter humour and vehement feelings, even in the presence of those whose rank commonly imposes restraint on ordinary characters and inferior classes. The Prince Francesco Ximenes having arrived in Rome, found time, in the midst of the honours paid to him, to visit Sal-

* While leading a life apparently so conformable to his vanity and ambition in the midst of the great and the noble, he thus writes to Ricciardi:—“As you have excited my envy by your description of your residence at Carfagnana, enjoying that wood scenery so consonant to both our tastes, I swear to you that I have bid farewell to happiness since I have quitted Monte Ruffoli.”—*Letters of Salvator Rosa.*

vator Rosa, and being received by the artist in his gallery, he told him frankly, that he "had come for the purpose of seeing and purchasing some of those beautiful small landscapes, whose manner and subjects had delighted him in many foreign galleries."* "Be it known then to your Excellency," interrupted Rosa impetuously, "that *I know nothing* of landscape painting. Something indeed I *do* know of painting figures and historical subjects, which I strive to exhibit to such eminent judges as yourself, in order that once for all I may banish from the public mind that fantastic humour of supposing I am a landscape, and not an historical painter."

Shortly after, a very rich cardinal ("ricchissimo porporato"), whose name is not recorded, called on Salvator to purchase some pictures; and as his Eminence walked up and down the gallery, he always paused before some certain quadretti, and never before the historical subjects, while Salvator muttered from time to time between his clenched teeth, "sempre, sempre, paesi piccole." When at last the Cardinal glanced his eye over some great historical picture, and carelessly asked the price as a sort of company question, Salvator bellowed forth, "un milione." His Eminence, stunned or offended, hurried away, and returned no more.

It was at this period that Salvator painted his fine picture of "Job;" for he, like the great subject of his selection, was one "*bitter in soul*." In this noble picture, the sufferer appears equally tormented by the remonstrances of friends, and the inflictions of his destiny. One in the garb of philosophy is evidently reasoning with him in vain, while a rude soldier gives him all the uncalculated sympathy of deep-felt commiseration, so much more soothing to misery than the counsel of the prudent or the precepts of the wise. This is one of Salvator's finest works. It is a reproduction of himself. It was purchased for, and long graced, the Santa Croce gallery at Rome. It is at present in England.†

* His own words are, "Sapiate ch' io non so fare paesi! So ben fare le figure, le quale io procuro che sieno vedute dagli studiosi delle arti, e da persone di alcuno giudizio come voi siete, per cavare una volta del capo alla gente questo fantastico umore ch' io sia pittore da paese, e non da figure."

† A visitor at Fonthill Abbey observes of this picture, while speaking of others in the collection, "The Job of Salvator Rosa, in my opinion, is

He now obstinately refused to paint any small pictures whatever; and was so maddened by perpetual opposition, ("entrato in un smanio così inquiete," that no sum that could be offered him (and the largest, says Passeri, were at his disposal) could induce him for a time to break through a resolution so sustained by his pride, yet so injurious to his interests.

While he was thus struggling against the arduous intrigues of professional rivalry in one art, he was attacked on the subject of another (as he himself expresses it) by "*the horrible infamies of his enemies*," with a species of insidious malignity against which there was no protection. Some accused him of usurping the fame of another, of whose posthumous works he had possessed himself; others denied his poetry all merit whatsoever. Some partisans of the Government, under colour of a mere curiosity to hear his satires, or a desire of replying to them, (according to the wrangling spirit of the day, which placed all literary subjects in dispute,) proved themselves the suborned spies upon his privacy; and in their attempts to draw down public odium in the place of his too influential popularity, so darkly misrepresented his life, manners, and recitations, that he was induced for a moment to defend himself in a court of justice. It appears, too, from his own correspondence, that one of the ablest lawyers in Rome was desirous to undertake his cause, from the éclat he was aware it would bestow on him.

"Imagine," (says Salvator upon this occasion, to his friend Ricciardi,) "Imagine the condition of your friend, 'of him who is all *spirit, life, and fire*!' Still, however, I ought to wear the mask of contempt and patience. I should remember that their fires are of straw, and mine of asbestos."*

The continued irritation of Salvator's feelings at this epoch is best painted by his own words. In less than a month after the date of the above quoted letter, he observes to Ricciardi, "I have nothing of interest to communicate to you, if I do not tell you that peace is, I believe, for ever

worth them altogether. This is very little more than a fine piece of *chiaro-oscuro*; but painted with such strong character and effect as to awe the beholder."

* Letters of Salvator Rosa.

banished from my mind, in consequence of those same blessed Satires, (which ere I had written, I wish I had broken my neck.) In fine, everything now concurs to render me wretched, even in defiance of all the prudence and all the virtue in the world. Two of my enemies, however, have relaxed something of their persecutions, on hearing my last satire (L' Invidia)." While he thus, in the secret confidence of friendship, exhibited all the weakness of an irritable sensibility and wounded self-love, in all external appearances he "bated not a jot of hope and spirit," but said publicly, that "instead of decrying his Satires, the bells of Rome should ring out a peal to collect the people to come and listen to them:" and he addressed a humorous expostulatory remonstrance to his literary censors, which, though not printed, is still said to be extant in manuscript.

It appears that his "Invidia," by its powerful strain of invective and intrinsic poetical merits, stunned for a moment the audacity of his enemies, and increased the number of his admirers; and the tremulously nervous Salvator, flushed by the consciousness of his triumphs, resumed much of his natural cheeriness, and high tension of mind and spirit. He now occasionally amused himself with his favourite histrionic pursuits, and struck out a new road to fame, which, had he never pursued any other, would have procured him the reputation of one of the first artists of his age. In November, 1660, he thus writes to Ricciardi: "For some weeks back I have been amusing myself by etching in *aqua-fortis*: in good time you shall see the results. It has not been my good fortune to produce these works (as I had hoped) in the solitudes of Strozzevolpe,* but I have still reserved some subjects to execute there, when the *dove shall have found its resting place*."† That event so long and so ardently desired by Salvator, the visit to Tuscany, and the repose of his fluttered spirits in the calms of its lovely scenery, at last arrived. The marriage of the heir apparent of Tuscany (afterwards Cosmo III.) with the beautiful and unfortunate Marguerite d'Orleans, was celebrated in 1661 in Florence, with a magnificence which the ostentatious Medici were always too happy to

* The villa of the Ricciardi family.

† See letters at the end of this volume.

find occasions of exhibiting. Salvator Rosa was not only urged by his friends the Maffei, Ricciardi, and Minucci, to avail himself of this gay and festive event for visiting Florence, and relieving his harassed and overwrought mind by temporary recreations, but more than one of the Medici princes gave him a special invitation to partake of the royal and nuptial festivities. Salvator had the farther inducement of being accompanied in his journey by his intimate friend the Abate Cesti, the composer, who had been engaged by the Grand Duke Ferdinand to get up an opera for the court theatre, suitable to the occasion. A crowd of hospitable friends canvassed the pleasure of having Salvator and his family for their guests; for he came accompanied by Lucrezia and his little son Augustus, or, as he calls him, Farfarnicchio. In Florence it appears that he took up his residence with his old friend Paolo Minucci, the commentator of the Malmantile; and in the country he enjoyed the eulogized shades of Strozza Volpe, the villa of the Ricciardi. It was on the occasion of this visit, that Salvator had the honour of knowing the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and his accomplished duchess, (a true Medici,) who had left their elegant little court of Inspruck, (the Weimar of that age,) to assist at the nuptials of their nephew.

The Archduchess, whose pride it was to collect around her the most distinguished men of the day, who carried off Lorenzo Lippi to delight her literary circle with the recitation of his "Malmantile," and to decorate the walls of the gallery at Inspruck, with his pictures, now, with a "vaulting ambition" that had higher quarry in view, commissioned Cesti to feel the pulse of Salvator Rosa relative to a visit to Inspruck. The bard, poet, painter, and actor, would have been a special prize for a *Grande Dame de par le monde*, and the terms offered to induce him to accept so gracious an invitation, repeated *de vive voix* both by the Archduke and Duchess, were enough to have tempted even the most disinterested, or to have flattered the most vain-glorious. But Salvator peremptorily, though respectfully, declined an honour which, with all its distinctions, was still in his eyes *dependence*;* and so little did this royal invita-

* "Non volle impegnarsi più dopo che disimpegnatosi fu dal Principe di Toscana al servizio di nessun altro; tutto che più volte ne fosse stato da diverse persone richiesto, e spezialmente del A. D. Ferdinando. Soleva

tion touch him, that, though his letters on his return to Rome abound in allusions to his "divine Strozzavolpe," he never once hints at the honours which awaited him in the gilded saloons of the Imperial Court of Inspruck.* It appears that at the very moment he declined becoming a member of a royal coterie, his proneness to study nature led him frequently to associate with one of the humblest of her children, and this philosophical disposition became the cause of an influential event on his future life. There dwelt in the service of Paolo Minucci, a domestic holding a place between that of a house-steward and a *chef de cuisine*, for he equally regulated the accounts and superintended the cookery of the learned and reverend commentator's establishment. "He was," says Baldinucci, "a fellow of a coarse humour," ("di grossa pasta e rozzo legname,") mingling with a sort of half-witted buffoonery much native shrewdness and sagacity. Allowed to say whatever he pleased, and always pleasing to say something worth hearing, he appears to have been the very type of those *mis-named* fools, who were frequently the only wise persons in the courts and great houses in which they were retained for the amusement of the masters.

Salvator Rosa, struck by the humour of this kitchen Democritus, on whom he had bestowed the name of "Il Filosofo Negro"—"the grimy Philosopher"—was wont occasionally to hold with him "a keen encounter of the wits." It happened one day that, as he sat carelessly on the edge of a marble table chatting with this Filosofo Negro, who stood before him, the conversation took a turn which enabled the cook to mutter many sly attacks upon the notorious extravagance, in pecuniary matters, of the prodigal painter. Salvator in vain endeavoured to parry the blow,

perciò dire, che stimava più la sua libertà, che tutti gli onori e tutto l'oro del mondo, perche non ha prezzo." *Pascoli*.—"When once liberated from the service of the Archduke, he never would engage himself again, though often invited by many persons of distinction, especially the Archduke Ferdinand. He was wont to say that he valued his liberty above all the honours and riches in the world, as being beyond all price."

* "Il aimait tant sa liberté," (says a writer the least favourable to Salvator, in speaking of this invitation,) "qu'il refusa d'entrer au service d'aucun Prince, quoiqu'on l'en eut souvent pressé; entr'autres Don Ferdinand d'Autriche quand il vint à Florence pour les noces du Grand Duc avec Marguerite d'Orléans."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres, &c.*

by a defence of his contempt of wealth on philosophical principles, and laughingly concluded his argument by observing, "One thing is certain, Il mio Filosofo Negro, that in the hour I have fooled away with you I might have earned an hundred scudi."

"Da vero!" exclaimed the cook, opening his eyes, "Eh ben, Signor padrone mio, siete dunque un gran goffo!"—"In truth! Then verily, master o' mine, thou art an arrant blockhead for thy pains!" Then throwing himself into an oratorical posture, he continued, "Now what is all this talk about philosophy, and independence, and the like, come to? Suppose your philosophership lost your voice by a cold, your hand by an accident, or your leg by a fall, Signor Dio! what then becomes of this same philosophy? where then would be *our* famous Signor Rosa! Signor Rosa the improvvisatore! Signor Rosa the marvellous painter! Signor Rosa the poet and actor!! No, marry, it would *then* be Signor Rosa the cripple, Signor Rosa the pauper, Signor Rosa the mendicant. Sante Madre! I see him now standing at the porch of one of our holy churches, with his staff and his poor-box (bossolo) stunning the good devotees as they pass, with 'Carità, Signori Cristiani miei!' Philosophy, in sooth! I never yet could see the beauty of *that* philosophy which leads to the *staff and the poor-box*."

The cook, having thus rounded his period, wiped his greasy face and went about his business. But when Minucci returned to his house after some hours' absence, he found Salvator, with crossed arms and dangling legs, seated pensively on the marble slab where he had left him on going abroad. Minucci, accustomed to his fitful abstractions, sat down beside him, and accidentally turned the conversation to the arts, and the general extravagance of artists, whose money went more lightly than it came. Salvator agreed with him, and declared emphatically his own intention of beginning the most rigorous reform in his expenditure, until, growing warm as he spoke, he concluded by sketching a plan of life for his future conduct, which was that of the most penurious miser, "in order," he said, "that he might provide against the accidents of age, infirmity, and the world's neglect." Minucci, struck by the suddenness of this extraordinary change, and the vehemence with which it was announced, began to argue on the

danger and folly of extremes in all things; when Salvator, impatiently springing from the table, exclaimed, "What! do you then desire to see me reduced to beggary? and to behold me standing at a church porch with a staff and a box, and *Carità, Signori Cristiani miei?*" Minucci thought he was mad; but on inquiry he discovered that his half-witted cook had done more by *an image* than all the learned and sage friends of Salvator had been able to effect by reiterated counsels of economical reform. The *graphic* reasoning of the grimy philosopher had its effect to a certain degree, and Salvator now first began to accumulate and economise; yet he was so far from acting up to the standard of reformation he had at first proposed, that when Ricciardi and Lippi both chided him some time after for some new act of unwarrantable generosity, he petulantly replied to their remonstrances, "Voi volete dunque farmi avido di denaro, ed io vi dico, che fo, e farò tutto quello ch' io posso per distruggere in me medesimo ogni primiero moto di desiderio ch' io posso che me ne venga."—"You wish me then to become sordidly fond of money; but I must take leave to tell you that I, on the contrary, shall do everything in my power to eradicate whatever tendency I may have, or that may arise in me, towards that habit."

During this much-enjoyed visit to Florence, no profit or persuasion could induce him to apply himself to his profession: in answer to all requests, he replied, "he had come to enjoy, and not to work;" and though he accepted orders from the Martelli family, the young Prince Cosmo (afterwards Grand Duke), and others, for pictures to be painted on his return to Rome, he would enter into no engagement which could disturb the calm, or interrupt the recreations, of the passing moment.

But absolute idleness was impossible to his active and restless nature, and fertile and brilliant imagination; and while conversing in the literary circles of Florence, or lounging in the delicious shades of Strozzevolpe, he was always seen busily occupied with his graver, sketching or scratching on copper some of those spirited and graceful engravings in aqua fortis,* which are now deemed no less

* One of these etchings, which now lies before me, is curious as being a sort of allegorical portrait, or moral delineation, of Salvator himself. It is known to collectors by the name of the "Genius of Salvator Rosa." The

powerful proofs of his genius, than his beautiful landscapes or noble figure-pieces. "Perceiving that all he did succeeded, he continued to occupy himself with this new pursuit, and now produced several fine etchings, some on flying sheets (*fogli volanti*), and of a large size; others he did not finish till his return to Rome." "It were unnecessary," adds Passeri, "to describe the conceits and fancies which he executed on paper, because they are now all in general circulation, and every one may judge for himself; but I must needs say, that in these, as in all his other works, he exhibited the lustre of his fine genius, the hardihood of his spirited conceptions, and the decision of his bold hand, displaying great originality in his ideas, great wildness in his figures and their draperies, and a free and resolute touch in the leafing of his trees, so that altogether these works are well worthy the admiration of the best judges."

While Salvator continued to refuse all applications for his pictures, he was accidentally taken in to paint what he so rarely condescended to do—a *portrait*.

There lived in Florence a good old dame of the name of Anna Gaetano, who, though of some celebrity, held no more notable a rank than that of keeping an *osteria*, or inn, over the door of which were inscribed in large letters, "*Al buono vino non bisogna fruscia*"—"good wine needs no bush," (or literally, good wine wants *no rubbing up*, or puffing;) but it was not the racy Orvietto alone of Madonna Anna that drew to her house some of the most distinguished men of Florence, and made it particularly the resort of the Cavalieri Oltramontani:—her humour was as racy as her wine; and many of the men of *wit and pleasure upon town* were in the habit of lounging in the Sala Com-scene represents a wooded spot, with a fragment of fine architectural ruin, shaded by cypress trees, before which stands the dignified figure of a philosopher habited in the Roman toga, and holding in his hand the old Roman balance. Near him stands a satyr, with an arch and demoniac look, holding a roll of paper in his hand, which he points to the balance. At the feet of both, reclines a figure, who carelessly rejects the treasures which wealth pours before it from out her cornucopia, while a dead dove lies on its bosom, and its eyes are turned on a fine representation of liberty, who presents her cap. Painting appears in the background, leaning on an entablature sketched with a human form; underneath, Salvator has engraved the following distich:—

Ingenuus, liber, Pictor, succensor et æquus,
Spretor opum, et mortis, hic meus est genius.

mune of Dame Gaetano, merely for the pleasure of drawing her out. Among these were Lorenzo Lippi and Salvator Rosa; and though this Tuscan Dame Quickly was in her seventieth year, hideously ugly, and grotesquely dressed, she was yet so far from deeming herself an "antidote to the tender passion," that she distinguished Salvator Rosa by a preference which deemed itself not altogether hopeless of return. While emboldened by this familiarity and condescension, she had the vanity to solicit him to paint her picture, "that she might," she said, "reach posterity by the hand of the greatest master of the age." Salvator at first received her proposition as a jest, for he rarely condescended to paint portraits, unless his *caricato* sketches may be called such; but, perpetually teased by her reiterated importunities, and provoked by her pertinacity, he at last exclaimed—

"Orsù, Madonna, io ho deliberato da servirvi in quanto desiderate di me; con questo patto, per non distrarre la mia mente del lavoro, voi state quì, a sedere senza punto muovere da luogo, fin tanto ch' io abbia finita l' opera mia, e se voi lascierete di ciò fare, lasciero io di dipingere.

"Well, Madonna, I have resolved to comply with your desire; but with this agreement, that, not to distract my mind during my work, I desire you will not move from your seat until I have finished the picture."

Madonna, willing to submit to any penalty in order to obtain an honour which was to immortalize her sexagenary charms, joyfully agreed to the proposition; and Salvator, sending for an easel and painting materials, drew her as she sat before him, to the life. The portrait was dashed off with the usual rapidity and spirit of the master, and was a *chef-d'œuvre*. But, when at last the vain and impatient hostess was permitted to look upon it, she perceived that to one of the strongest and most inveterate likenesses that ever was taken, the painter had added a long beard; and that "mine hostess *al buon vino*" figured on the canvas as an ancient male pilgrim—a character admirably suited to her furrowed face, weather-beaten complexion, strong lineaments, and grey hairs. Her mortified vanity vented itself in the most violent abuse of the ungallant painter, of whom her sex had ordinarily so little to complain; and she is described as dealing out her Tuscan Billingsgate, with a

purity that would have excited the envy of the most consummate Trecentisto of the Della-Cruscan School. Salvator, probably less annoyed by her animosity than disgusted by her preference, called upon some of her guests (ultramontane painters and others) to judge between them. The artists saw only the merits of the fine painting, the laughers only looked to the jest; and the value affixed to the exquisite portrait soon reconciled the vanity of the original, through her interests. After the death of Madonna Anna, her portrait was sold by her heirs at an enormous price, and is said to be still in existence.

The reluctance with which Salvator terminated his visit to Florence, and to the beautiful solitudes of Strozzevolpe, may be drawn from the evidence of his letters. From the month of November, 1662, to a short time before his death, they are all records of his feelings and his regrets, on this ever deeply interesting event. "It is wholly superfluous," he observes to Ricciardi, "to remind me of my last year's residence at Strozzevolpe; there passes not a day of my life in which my heart fails to celebrate in solemn commemoration, even the most trifling incident that occurred there; and that, too, not without considerable anguish, arising from the contrast of this epoch with my present position. The minutest particulars are recalled only to torment me; and I am perpetually chiding Agosto, who, by the bye, remembers everything, and who constantly embitters memory by reviving its impressions: this happens to be the case more particularly in this precise month, which was last year so pregnant with enjoyment."

In April, 1662, and not long after his return to Rome, his love of wild and mountainous scenery, and perhaps his wandering tendencies revived by his recent journey, induced him to visit Loretto, or at least to make that holy city the shrine of a pilgrimage, which it appears was one rather of taste than of devotion.

His reference to this journey is curious, as being illustrative of those high imaginations, and lofty and lonely feelings, in which lay all the secret of his peculiar genius: while his pantings after solitude, his vain repinings, exhibit the struggles of a mind divided between a natural love of repose, and a factitious ambition for the world's notice, and the *éclat* of fame—no unusual contrast in those who, being highly gifted

and highly organized, are placed by nature above their species in all the splendid endowments of intellect; and who are, by the same nature, again drawn down to its level through their social and sympathetic affections.

In taking the route from Rome to Loretto, which is tracked through the wildest and steepest branch of the Apennines, in exploring the stupendous elevations of the Col-fiorito, in wandering among the sterile deserts of Seravalle, the rocks and precipices of Valcimara,* the imagination of Salvator seems to have found its own region; and he observes to Ricciardi, "Your Verucolo, which I once thought such a dreary desert, I shall now look upon as a fair garden, comparing it with the scenes I have visited in these Alpine solitudes! Oh, God! how often have I sighed to possess—how often since called to mind, those solitary hermitages which I passed on the road—how often wished that fortune had reserved for me such a destiny!"†

On returning to Rome from a tour so prolific in enjoyment, he, however, did not the less resume his ordinary habits of life, but opened his house as usual to the learned and the great; and applied himself with invigorated spirit to his professional duties, (for which his long leisure seemed to have given him a new zest,) and to his literary pursuits, which he always cultivated with zeal. "In 'both,'" says Passeri, "he now acquired immortal fame; honoured by princes, and eulogized by the first literati, who came in crowds to visit him, and to enjoy his gracious conversation; and he who would relate all the subtilties of his arguments, the promptitude of his repartees, and the witty gallantries, which he daily uttered in the circle of his intimate friends, would fill *a thick volume*."

* In the splendid collection of pictures at Rusborough (county of Wicklow), the seat of the Earl of Miltown, are two fine landscapes by Salvator Rosa, one of which is stamped with all the characteristic features of the scenery of Seravalle, and may have been executed after his return from Loretto. This public edifice, and Lyons, the seat of Lord Cloncurry, are the mansions in Ireland which exhibit perhaps in the highest degree that taste for the fine arts, and that liberality of spirit, which indicate so much the civilization and refinement of any country.

† Letters of S. Rosa.

CHAPTER X.

WHILE Salvator sighed, or fancied he sighed, for an hermitage among the savage cliffs of Seravalle, his insatiable ambition for glory, and his want of those strong excitements which increase of fame ever brings with it, when "appetite still grows with what it feeds on," urged him to fresh exertions in his art, and again exposed him to fresh attacks from the envy and intrigues of professional rivalry.

In the spring of 1662 he exhibited three fine pictures in the Pantheon, on the feast of Saint John, whose subjects were (as he observes to Ricciardi) "fresh and untouched."

The first was "Pythagoras on the Sea-shore," paying some fishermen for the permission to emancipate the fish they had just caught; "a fact," observes Salvator, "which I have taken from Plutarch."

The second represented the same philosopher issuing from a subterranean cavern to his disciples of both sexes, and relating to them his visit to the infernal regions, and his interview with Hesiod.

The third was "Jeremiah thrown into a Pit" by the Princes of Judea, for having prophesied the downfall of Jerusalem.

These pictures met with that success from the public which, at this time, attended all his works; and they were attacked by professional and party criticism with that virulence which was levelled at everything produced by the author of "La Fortuna" and "La Babilonia." To the critical jargon of his enemies he replied by one of the most splendid of his productions, his bold, spirited, and magnificent "Jason;" and the paltry animadversions of peevish and jealous mediocrity were for a time silenced. It was reserved, however, for the exhibition of the year 1663, to be distinguished by the exposition of the master-work of his life and genius,—the work which he himself has stamped with superiority over all his other pictures, by giving it the title of "*mio quadro grande!*"—"my great picture!"

This great picture was his "Catiline Conspiracy." His own modest and simple account of it, given in an hurried manner to his friend Ricciardi, is as follows:—

"I have exhibited at the Festa di San Giovanni Decolato, this year, my great picture! It consists of a group literally taken from the text of Sallust's history of the Catiline Conspiracy. It has had the most extraordinary success with all the true judges; I tell you this, because we ought to share our triumphs with a friend, and, above all, such a friend as you have ever been to me."*

The scene of this noble picture is an apartment in Catiline's palace. The light, which falls from above, is reflected from the marble walls, and most skilfully illuminates the heads of the splendid group in the foreground; leaving the lower part of the picture in deep and effective shadow. A beautiful antique tripod occupies the centre, and serves as an altar for the celebration of a fearful ceremony. The moment taken by the painter in the story of Catiline, is that so terrible and imposing, when, having detailed, with all the magic eloquence for which he was so noted, his views, and the nature of his perilous enterprise, he induces the conspirators to bind themselves to secrecy, and to the cause, by a solemn oath, consecrated by the awful ceremony of pledging each other in wine mingled with human blood.† The ceremony is just begun. Two persons in the dress of the Roman nobility stand forward, each with an arm outstretched and hands clasped over the tripod, while blood drops from the arm of one into a beautiful cup, or vase, held beneath.

In the countenance of him who bleeds, and whose blood is about to be quaffed, may be read one lettered and marked out for dupery—one expressly chosen from the band for this fearful act, that its awfulness might, by impressing his imagination with terror, bind him to that faith and secrecy he had not the strength or honour to preserve without such a sanction. Though of high birth, he was one stained with crime and obloquy, at once vain and audacious: incapable of keeping the secrets of others, or of hiding his

* Letters of S. Rosa.

† "There were many people," says Sallust, "in that time, who said that Catiline, after he had made his speech and come to the administration of an oath to the conspirators, carried round a cup of human blood mingled with wine." Salvator Rosa has taken a much nobler view of this subject, and made a finer use of the terrible incident than Ben Jonson, who makes Catiline order a slave to be killed for the purpose. The conspirators of the great English dramatist are all vulgar ruffians.

own follies. This feeble villain is evidently Quintus Curius, who is thus described by Sallust, and thus painted in every trait and lineament by Salvator Rosa! the treachery which proceeds from weakness, is already traceable in the timid indecision of his looks!

In the well-defined features of him who clasps the hand of Curius, lurks more honesty, but not more firmness of purpose. He appears overpowered rather than convinced; but he takes the oath, and seems equally divided in his attention by the awful act in which he is engaged, and by the stunning eloquence of that splendid apparition which hovers like an evil genius near him, and which though seen but in profile, with upraised arm and pointed finger, exhibits an almost unearthly superiority over all who surround it! This figure is Catiline—

“Whose countenance is a civil war itself,
And all his host have standing in his looks.”*

He is evidently winding up the courage of his dupes to its sticking-place, both by look, and word, and gesture—while a Roman patrician, with a keen concentrated glance, as he holds the cup under the bleeding arm, reads the effects of the chief's eloquence, in the looks of Curius. Filling up the background to the left of the picture, are two of the old guard of Sylla, in full armour. Long broken into civil dissensions, and ready in the weariness of slothful peace for any active mischief, they are gazing on the scene before them with looks of admiration and vulgar wonder, wondrously expressed. It is remarkable that over the stern features and martial figures of these veterans the painter has shed an air of plebeian grossness, which singularly and artfully contrasts with the high blood and dignified elegance of the patrician conspirators; some of whom fill up the background to the right. One, however, there is among them not confounded in their group, who comes prominently forward, as turning in disgust or horror from the atrocious ceremony of sealing an oath by a libation of human blood! one, too, to whom the shedding of human blood was yet familiar, and who probably envious even then of the influence of Catiline, was already meditating that greater and far more fatal conspiracy against the liberties of Rome,

* “Catiline,” by Ben Jonson.

which placed the world's diadem at his own feet. It is Julius Cæsar!—Such is the cold outline of a picture, which forms a page in history, and is never to be looked on but with powerful emotion!*

The “Catiline Conspiracy,” in its conception, execution, and success, gave a new spring to the genius, and brighter éclat to the fame, of Salvator Rosa! But the political state of Europe at that particular epoch, and the sanguinary war into which it was plunged during the years 1664–5, had a considerable and very injurious influence on the arts. The difficulty of conveying pictures from Rome to other continental states, when every road was a military pass, shut up the market, and for a time left the first masters in Italy unemployed.

“For my part,” says Salvator Rosa, “I may go and plant my pencil in my garden;” but he added, in his usual philosophic tone, “all wealth lies in the mind.” This mine, however, did not satisfy him, for he observes to Ricciardi, that “though there was not even a dog to bespeak a picture, in such times, yet his engravings and etchings enabled him to keep his purse from running dry”—upon which, it appears, his style of living made no small demands.

It is obvious, however, from his letters, that the suspension of his pictorial labours, at particular intervals,

* A fine engraving of the picture, which is here so inadequately described, lies before me as I write. It is by the Baron Denon, from whom I have just received it; and who, in a letter which accompanied the welcome present, observes on the Catiline of Salvator Rosa, “Dans ce tableau l’expression de l’inquietude, de l’agitation, du trouble est telle, qu’elle fait passer *toutes les sensations dans l’âme du spectateur*! Quelqu’un, dont j’ai oublié le nom, a dit spirituellement en le regardant, ‘que Rome ne pouvait jamais être en sûreté, tant qu’un de ces hommes là existerait.’” The following account of this splendid picture is taken from one of the learned commentators of Passeri’s “Lives of the Painters.” “Famosissimo è il quadro della Congiura di Catilina, posseduto in Firenze dalla nobilissima casa Martelli, dove le figure sono al naturale, ma sono mezze, cioè dalla cintura in sù; Di esso in una lettera, stampata del dotissimo Signore Conti Magalotti, ce ne è una mirabile descrizione, come è mirabile il quadro, perche, datagli un occhiata alla sfuggita, si vede che quelli sono scellerati chi ordiscono qualche congiura o altro capital misfatto; e volendo che chi si sia indovinasse la testa di Catilina, tutti daranno nella medesima, e diranno che non puo esser altra che quella che accennano, benché tutte siano atroci, e d’assassino; inoltre il luogo e le tinte usate quì dal Rosa, sono proprie per un congiura di terribile importanza.”

did not wholly proceed from the want of orders, or decline of public favour.

His fine but fatal organization, which rendered him so susceptible of impressions, whether of good or evil, and which left him at times no shelter against "horrible imaginings," or against those real inflictions, calumny and slander, plunged him too frequently into fits of listless melancholy, when, disabused of all illusion, he saw the species to which he belonged in all the nakedness of its inherent infirmity.

"How I hate the sight of every spot that is inhabited," he observes to Ricciardi, in allusion to his cravings after that solitude which his condition in life prevented him from enjoying. It was, indeed, under the influence of these morbid moods of constitutional sadness, that his genius, in losing the object of its exertions, lost its powers also; and he confesses in his letter dated 1664, "that the fatigue and lassitude of painting had become so great, that, to avoid falling into an utter disgust with his art, he was resolved to choose only the most facile subjects." And yet this was written one year after he had painted his Catiline, and nearly four years previous to the execution of a work that rivalled, if it could not surpass, that *chef-d'œuvre* of his pencil—his "Saul and the Witch of Endor." The excitement which was necessary to lash him up to this high exertion, was afforded him by the following incident.

The usual annual exhibition of the feast of San Giovanni Decollato was got up in the year 1668, with a splendour hitherto unsurpassed, and in a manner that excited the profoundest mortification among the Roman painters of all classes.

The nephews and brother of the recently elected and reigning Pope, Clement X. (Rospigliosi), in all the intoxication of those "new honours" which "cleave not to their use but with the aid of time," meddled and interposed, even with institutions and establishments the least within the sphere of their proper influence and dictation. They chose to extend their interference, if not their patronage, to the arts, and to enrol themselves as members of the Compagnia della festa di San Giovanni Decollato. From this illustrious fraternity the humbler members boded no good; and Salvator, in a letter to Ricciardi, thus alludes to

the circumstance, and to its probable results. "The brother of a Pope, with his four sons, have chosen to enter as novices into the company of the festa di San Giovanni; and to extinguish all hopes of success in the hearts of those who may hereafter choose to enter the lists, they have actually despoiled the walls of the galleries of Rome of their most superb pictures, and, above all, the celebrated collection of the Queen of Sweden, (to exhibit on the occasion of the *festa*,) which collection alone might intimidate the Devil himself! The motive of their lordships acting in this manner is simply to exclude from the exhibition the works of all the living painters of the age; and this intention on their parts was sufficient to determine me, on mine, to enter the lists, which, with infinite difficulty, I have accomplished; and I alone, of all the living artists, have been permitted to compete with the mighty dead. I swear to you that I never felt so wound up to any enterprise before; but as so fine an opportunity of distinction may never again occur, I lay aside every consideration to start for the all which fame may yet have in reserve for me."*

When this high honour was accorded to Salvator, probably more under the influence of public opinion, than from any partiality to the author of the Satires, Claude Lorraine and the Poussins were still living, and in Rome; and Carlo Maratti, and Pietro da Cortona, were each at the head of their crowded and fashionable schools. The distinction, therefore, accorded to Salvator Rosa, bears out Lanzi in his observation that Salvator Rosa was the painter most in fashion from the close of the seventeenth to the early part of the eighteenth century.† The two pictures which he exhibited on this trying occasion, and which stood competition with the works of Da Vinci and Raphael, of the Caracci and Domenichino, were his "Triumph of Saint George over the Dragon," and his "Saul and the Witch of Endor." Three eminent geniuses have, at remote epochs, chosen the grand dramatic story of the king of Israel, as a subject worthy of their high conceptions and consummate art—Salvator Rosa, Alfieri, and Byron. It is remarkable that the first and last should have selected precisely the

* Letters of S. Rosa.

† "Su i principi di questo secolo il Rosa era il più acclamato."—*Storia Pittorica*, vol. ii. p. 193.

same poetical incident in the life of Saul; and that the picture of one might serve as an illustration of the poem of the other: with this difference, that the graphic power of the Italian painter all centres in her whose "spell could raise the dead," and in him who hearkens to that fearful prophecy—

"Crownless, breathless, headless, fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul:"

while the descriptive powers of the English poet, still more imaginative and ideal, are principally directed to that "Phantom Seer," who

"Stood the centre of a cloud;"

The grouping is the same in both; and both are of those high-wrought and splendid conceptions, which Mediocrity never "dreams of in *her own* philosophy," and scarcely understands while she affects to admire it in others. The Saul of Salvator Rosa shared the triumph of his Regulus and his Catiline; and his reputation as a painter, like his life, had now reached its solstice:—to move was to descend.*

Still, however, "the something unpossessed" was coveted in the midst of all the triumph won by merit over calumny; and while all Europe had become his gallery, he pined in thought over the deep but imaginary mortification of being still excluded from all the public works in Rome—that city, whose suffrages he overrated, as persons will overrate the good opinion of those among whom they dwell, and with whose passions, habits, and interests, their own are in daily contact.

Names now only preserved in the chronological lists of pictorial history, were then affixed to the great altar-pieces of the noblest churches in Rome; and the *médiocre* Romanelli, under the special patronage of Bernini, (who took

* "Samuel et Saul, et la grande Bataille, sont toujours ici (à Paris). Celui de Samuel est une des belles productions de ce maître (S. Rosa), parce que le sujet sombre et mystérieux a rencontré le génie de l'artiste: il est à remarquer qu'une teinte sombre caractérise toutes les productions de cet homme, qui a été, tout à la fois, peintre, poète satirique, et comédien bouffon." Extract of a letter from the Baron Denon to the author of the "Life and Times of Salvator Rosa," on her asking him if the "Saul" of Salvator Rosa was still in the Musée Royal of Paris.

him up in opposition to Pietro da Cortona, as he had once favoured Cortona out of malice to Sacchi,) was painting for Saint Peter's at Rome, and for the Duomo at Viterbo, while Salvator could not obtain the painting of those subordinate parts assigned to the pupils of any of the great masters of the day.

The spell, however, cast over the hopes and ambition of persecuted genius by party spirit and academic intrigues, was at last broken; and the joy he felt at being permitted to give a permanent picture to the Roman public, (un quadro permanente al pubblico,) is frankly expressed with a sort of childish triumph, in one of his letters to the Abate Ricciardi.

“*Sonate le campane!*—Ring out the chimes!—At last, after thirty years existence in Rome, of hopes blasted, and complaints reiterated against men and gods, the occasion is accorded me for giving one altar-piece to the public. The Signor Filippo Nerli, the Pope's Depositario, resolved upon vanquishing the obstinacy of my destiny, has endowed a chapel in the church of San Giovanni de' Fiorentini; and in despite of the stars themselves, has determined that I shall paint the altar-piece. It is five months since I began it, and I had only laid it aside with the intention of taking it up after Lent, when the occurrence of the *festa*, which the Florentines are obliged to celebrate here in this church, on the canonization of the Santa Maddelina de' Pazzi, has forced me to continue to work at it, and to shut myself up in my house, where, for this month and half, I have been suffering agonies lest I should not have my picture finished in time for their festival. This occupation has kept me not only secluded from all commerce of the pen, but from every other in the world; and I can truly say that I have forgotten myself, even to neglecting to eat; and so arduous is my application, that when I had nearly finished I was obliged to keep my bed for two days; and had not my recovery been assisted by emetics, certain it is it would have been all over with me, in consequence of some obstruction in the stomach. Pity me then, dear friend, if for the glory of my pencil, I have neglected to devote my pen to the service of friendship.”

This is a most animated picture of genius excited by encouragement and the love of fame, even beyond the con-

sideration of all personal wants and enjoyments; of the frail physical force giving way under the exertions of intellectual energy, and of the mind surviving all the subordinate agents and corporal faculties, which were to assist in realizing its powerful combinations!

Salvator, stretched on his couch, within sight of his unfinished altar-piece—almost reduced to death by his efforts to procure immortality—at a moment, too, when that great meed was already well won,—is an image to which all young artists, all aspiring geniuses, should turn their mind's eye; as the zealous in faith gaze devoutly on the pictured martyrs, whose glory has been the purchase of their sufferings and their sacrifices.

If the painting of this great altar-piece gave Salvator such joy, and caused him such deep anxiety and arduous occupation, it may well be supposed that the moment of its exposition was one of no faint interest to the sanguine painter. The day when any great work was exposed for the first time to the public, was always, in Italy, what the first night of a new tragedy once was in Paris—everybody was prepared to criticise and to decide, to blame or to praise! Salvator, always acting out of ordinary calculation, exhibited on this occasion considerable *sang-froid*. While the chapel of the Nerli, in the Chiesa de' Fiorentini, was crowded with spectators, all pressing forward to see the "Martyrdom of Saint Cosmus and Saint Damian," the first altar-piece ever exhibited in Rome by "Il Signore Salvatore," the Signor Salvator himself was taking his wonted evening's lounge on the Monte Pincio, arm in arm with his dear friend Carlo Rossi. The graphic description of Passeri's interview with him on that day, as given by the quaint and reverend painter himself, is well worth citing:—"He (Salvator) had at last exposed his picture in the San Giovanni de' Fiorentini; and I, to recreate myself, ascended on that evening to the heights of the Monte della Trinità, where I found Salvator walking arm in arm with Signor Giovanni Carlo dei Rossi, so celebrated for his performance on the harp of three strings (*tre registri*), and brother to that Luigi Rossi, who is so eminent all over the world for his perfection in musical composition. And when Salvator (who was my intimate friend) perceived me, he came forward laughingly, and said to me these pre-

cise words:—‘ Well, what say the malignants now? are they at last convinced that I *can* paint on the great scale? Why, if not, then e’en let Michael Angelo come down and do something better. Now at least I have stopped their mouths, and shewn the world what I am worth.’ I shrugged my shoulders. I and the Signor Rossi changed the subject to one which lasted us till nightfall; and from this (continues Passeri in his rambling way) it may be gathered how *gagliardo* he (Salvator) was in his own opinion. Yet it may not be denied but that he had all the endowments of a marvellous great painter! one of great resources and high perfection; and had he no other merit, he had at least that of being the originator of his own style. He spoke, this evening, of Paul Veronese more than of any other painter, and loved the Venetian School greatly. To Raphael he had no great leaning, for it was the fashion of the Neapolitan School to call him hard, (*‘di pietra,’*) dry, &c.”

The subject chosen by Salvator for his first and last altar-piece in Rome, was in perfect harmony with his own dark bold style. Saint Damian and Saint Cosmus were the victims of the cruel intolerance of Lysias, the Roman Pro-consul of the city of Egea; they were by him condemned to be burnt alive, with as little humanity as the successors of the saints ever displayed when in their turn they condemned all who refused their doctrine to the flames of an *auto da fé*. Salvator chose that moment when the brother saints were stretched upon a pile of burning wood, the flames of which, instead of consuming their bodies, spread forth on every side, and pursued the ministers of intolerance who were assembled to enjoy the tortures of the martyrs. It is in the amazement and terror expressed in the countenances of the objects of this miracle, and the variety of the attitudes into which they are thrown, that all the characteristic force of Salvator’s genius is particularly displayed. “Chi vuol ricercare in questo quadro un esattezza di disegno, io non saprei che mi dire se non ce la trova,” (says Passeri, speaking of this performance in all the freshness of immediate observation,) “dico bene che è di mano di Salvatore Rosa!” “Whoever looks in this picture for precision in the drawing, I know not what to say if he does not find it there; but I can say that it is by

the hand of Salvator Rosa!" The opinion of the Marchese Nerli was more decidedly given in the form of a crimson velvet purse filled with gold, and presented gallantly to Salvator Rosa on a silver *guantiera*, or glove-*etui*, a curious trait of the manners of the times, when gloves were so rich and ornamented, as to be laid by in such caskets as were then, and now are, appropriated to jewels. But gloves then were pitted against ladies' *hearts*, and, bauble for bauble, were perhaps well worth the trinket they purchased.

When Salvator counted out the thousand scudi which the velvet purse contained, he declared frankly, that the liberality of the Marchese was as much beyond the value of the picture as it was beyond the expectation of the painter; and he instantly sent back an hundred doubloons. The Marchese, however, would not accept the money, and wrote to Salvator, "that in this contest he was resolved on remaining *il Vincitore!*" Salvator yielded; but at the expiration of a few days he sent his generous friend one of his finest landscapes for his gallery, "which" (says the relator of the anecdote) "was well worth the hundred doubloons he had obliged him to accept." But neither the approbation of the liberal Nerli, nor the applauses of Salvator's partisans,* could conceal from him that his altar-piece was undergoing the severest criticism from the partial and the prejudiced; and in spite of all his gay and jocular vaunts on the evening of its exposition, Passeri confesses "that he was by no means satisfied with its success." His mind, however, was drawn off from its brooding disappointment, by the zealous and never-slumbering friendship of Carlo Rossi, who was resolved to follow the example of the Marchese Nerli, and to purchase and endow a chapel, for the purpose of assigning the altar-piece to the pencil of Rosa.

Salvator, who spoke out upon all subjects with a hardness that belonged to a better age, had frequently declaimed against the actual state of Rome in his time; and he used to place in satirical contrast its sumptuous palaces, with its close, narrow, and unventilated lanes and streets, and with what he called those "*mal-ordinate casaccie*," in

* The partisans of Salvator seem to have been no less violent than his enemies upon this occasion: they were, says Passeri, quite *uproarious* with their deafening acclamations.—"*Strepitassero con ischiamazzi orrendi.*"

which the inferior classes of its population were crammed; but, above all, he was wont to exclaim against the state of the principal entrance of a city which had been the "world's great mistress," and was still the temple of the arts. The Porta Flaminia (now the Porta del Popolo), through which all Europe poured the most distinguished of her sons, was then the entrance to a labyrinth of dark and filthy passages, obstructed by ruinous and tottering edifices—the wretched asylum of pauperism and vice. Salvator, in the hearing of Baldinucci and others, frequently proposed, as an undertaking worthy of the Government, the clearing away of these infected buildings, and the opening a noble space at the entrance of the city, to be decorated by two public edifices for the reception of strangers—an accommodation then particularly wanting in Rome, where travellers were wont to pass days in the streets, in houseless discomfort, vainly seeking for lodgings, the inns being few and miserable. But, while fabrics of ostentatious splendour were then rising on every side in Rome, works of utility were still neglected; and the noxious passages and ruinous buildings which choked the Porta Flaminia, might still have remained in all their original deformity, but that the threatened visit of that royal *Bergère derangée*, the Queen Christina of Sweden, to Pope Alexander VII., set Bernini to work to clear a passage for her entrance: and the now beautiful Piazza del Popolo was the result of the courtly artist's desire to render the pathway of royalty worthy of so illustrious a pilgrimage. In place, however, of the much-wanted public hotels or inns proposed by Salvator Rosa, two churches were rapidly built, which were not wanted at all. These were the elegant little temples which rise on either side the ingress to the Corso—the Chiesa di S. Maria de' Miracoli, and the Chiesa di S. Maria del Monte Santo. They were built in 1662, and do infinite honour to the memory of their architect, the Cavaliere Rainaldi.

Carlo Rossi was the first to purchase a chapel in one of these pretty churches, then an object of emulation among the wealthy Italians, as the purchase of an opera-box is now among the wealthy English. But friendship appears to have had at least as much to do as piety in the acquisition. The Capella dei Rossi, to the right of the nave in

the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Monte Santo, was scarcely rough cast, when its owner dedicated it not more to his patron saint, than to the genius of his admired friend. Salvator, who felt the full force of this kindness, began to make designs for the altar-piece and lateral departments; but languor and lassitude induced him to defer an undertaking to which he was desirous of bringing all those energies of his genius, which had gone to the execution of his Saul and his Catiline. It is melancholy to add, that this epoch never arrived. The hand of decay had already touched him; the spirit had gone out of him; and whoever now visits Rome, and may think it worth while to turn into the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Santo Monte will see, in the first chapel on the right, a monument of that friendship which death could not dissolve. Four pictures of Salvator Rosa's, hung up in this little chapel after his decease, by the hands of one of his earliest and his last friend, Carlo Rossi, are proofs of that posthumous tenderness which still devoted the sacred spot to its original destiny, and mingled the purest of all human affections with the holiest of all human sentiments.*

The views, the feelings, the very sensations of Salvator, were now contracting and fading fast under the influence of an overwrought mind, an exhausted brain, and morbid sensibility, too frequently and fatally excited. His habits changed with his health; he no longer sought to extend the sphere of action; all his feelings were home-directed, gathering fast round that domestic altar, the last asylum of affections which the world has failed to meet or to satisfy. In his letters written at this period, he frequently speaks of his "fireside," that solecism in an Italian establishment so rarely seen or understood. He thinks "an half eye" drawn by Farfinnochio, a subject worth

* Since the above was written, I have it on the authority of Signor Camucini (through the kindness of her Grace the late Duchess of Devonshire), that these pictures were transferred to the gallery of his Royal Highness Prince Leopold of Naples—a transfer nothing short of sacrilege in the eyes of the pictorial sentimentalist! The two largest of these pictures were, in 1819, apparently much injured by neglect and damp. The subjects were the Passion of Jesus Christ, and the Liberation of the Prophet Habakkuk by an Angel. In another chapel in the same church is (or *was*) a Holy Family by Salvator's contemporary, Carlo Maratti; a fine picture, but nearly ruined by the humidity of the place.

communicating to the grave professor of moral philosophy of the University of Pisa; and details all the minute shades or tremulous vibrations of his nervous temperament, with the accuracy of one who was now wholly devoted to a self-analysis. The wanderer of the savage Abruzzi, the dweller in caves, the prowler of blasted heaths, who stood the brunt of storms that "scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines," and trod with bounding step

"Over many a fiery, many a frozen Alp,"

now shrunk cowering from "the seasons' changes," shivering if snow whitened the distant hills of Albano, and languished if the sirocco blew over the groves of the Quirinal, though fraught with "native perfume;"

Whispering whence it stole its balmy spoil.

How much of his original fire was quenching, how rapidly those inward energies were changing, which repel all external influence of the elements in the morn and noon of life—was painfully exhibited in his eighteenth letter to Ricciardi, dated so far back as 1666! He there complains that "the severity of the year had all but destroyed him;" and adds, "that in great heats his head became quite dis-tempered, in severe cold he was ready to give up the ghost, and to bid 'good night' to his genius, with a 'to our merry meeting at the pit of Acheron!' I have suffered two months of agony," he continues, "even with the abstemious regimen of chicken broth! My feet are two lumps of ice, in spite of the woollen hose I have imported from Venice. I never permit the fire to be quenched in my own room, and am more solicitous than even the Cavalier Cigoli.* There is not a fissure in my house that I am not daily employed in diligently stopping up; and yet with all this I cannot get warm; nor do I think the torch of love, or the caresses of a Phryne herself, would kindle me into a glow. For the rest, I can talk of anything but my pencil; my canvas lies turned to the walls; my colours are dried up now and for ever;—nor can I give my thoughts to any sub-

* Lodovico Cardi di Cigoli, a celebrated painter of the sixteenth century, who in spite of every precaution died of a cold taken while painting in fresco in the Vatican. The humidity of the plaster is said to have killed him.

ject whatever, except chimney-corners, brasiers, warming-pans, woollen gloves, woollen caps, and such sort of gear. In short, dear friend, I am perfectly aware that I have lost much of my original ardours, and I am absolutely reduced to pass entire days without speaking a word: those fires, once mine, and once so brilliant, are now all spent, or evaporating in smoke. Woe unto me, should I now be reduced to exercise my pencil for bread! I should die in the harness. If you ask me how I pass my time, I answer,—in winter days, when the weather is serene, I wander forth like a maniac, prowling in all the solitudes of this region; in bad weather I shut myself up in my house, walking like one possessed; or in reading, or in listening, much more than in talking. Not a single week passes that orders do not arrive for pictures, to such an extent that I am covered with reproaches from all quarters; but I let them cry. None know where the shoe pinches so well as he that wears it."

This curious and interesting letter, which was written even before he painted his great picture of Saul, betrays the warning symptoms of Nature's great break-up, and the powers of a noble mind, rallying back from the stealing influence of progressive decay, and triumphing for a period even over Nature herself, when worked on by strong volition. His picture of St. Turpin, begun in October, 1669, and finished in the early part of 1670, was probably his last work of any importance.

He now painted but little, and no longer sought for new subjects in nature, animate or inanimate. His mind was a repertory, in which his wondrous memory had deposited an exhaustless store of imagery; and it is a curious fact, that early impressions at this period came up to the surface of his recollection with such strength and freshness, that whatever he produced was a strikingly recognizable portrait of those scenes in Apuglia and the Abruzzi, where he had loitered with greatest fondness in his boyhood: and Baldinucci says, "all was preserved *nella sua tenacissima fantasia*." He worked, however, only at remote intervals, and in the spring season; and thus added another name to the list of those sensitive children of genius, whose mental dependence on "seasons and their changes" has awakened the incredulity, or excited the derision, of one whose own

sturdy and steam-engine intellect was always to be thrown into movement, as the exigency of the moment demanded.*

Surrounded by old friends, the Rossi, Passeri, Baldinucci, Baldovini, Oliva,† and others of the same standing, and of the same tried and sterling worth, Salvator, partly at their request, and partly to give vent to a bitterness of temperament, which experience had rather sharpened than blunted, began about the latter end of the year 1671 a series of caricature portraits.

This style of painting, then so much in vogue by the name of Caricato, had been pursued by Caravaggio, was practised with great success by Domenichino, and had formed his principal recreation during his retreat from the persecution of the Neapolitan cabals in the shades of Frescati. It had been adopted by Guido,‡ and it was a branch of the art, says Baldinucci, “for which he (Salvator) had a most *bizarre* talent, which he exercised with great spirit”—“aveva un bizzarrissima facoltà e fu per certo spiritoso,” &c.

The Caricato was in painting what the broad comedy of farce is in the drama. It was nature strongly drawn, its ridicules exaggerated, and its foibles highly coloured; but still it was nature: and the Caricato of the seventeenth century is never to be confounded with those coarse and libellous representations of the human face divine, which humour and malice have frequently resorted to in modern times for the manifestation of their powers. Among his collections of Caricati, Salvator had not only preserved, at their particular requests, the likenesses of his own friends, with all their characteristic peculiarities, but had added also those of many other noted persons in Rome; and he was finishing the precious, and now invaluable,

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton.

† The celebrated Padre Gio. Paolo Oliva, general of the Jesuits.

‡ A Roman tailor was so enraptured with the caricatures of Caravaggio, that he engaged the young and unknown Guido Reni to paint him several heads in that peculiar *genre*. The obscure artist, the future creator of the Celestial Aurora, gladly engaged with the patronizing tailor at seven scudi *per head*; but his Mæcenas of the needle was so pleased with his productions, that he raised his price to twelve, and at last to thirty scudi. At the same moment, the Cardinal Farnese was haggling with Guido's immortal master, Annibal Caracci, who died the victim of the ostentatious parsimony of the mean and princely protector.

series with his own fine head* when the *pencil dropped from his hand*, and he found it impossible to continue the undertaking with the same spirit in which it had been commenced.† He turned his thoughts to other subjects, but he could not fix them—could not bring them to bear and rest upon a given point—attention wearied in the effort! All continuity of idea was broken up, all permanency of abstraction dissolved, and the grand but disjointed conceptions which still floated in the vague of his mighty but rapidly exhausting imagination, resembled the scattered wreck of some goodly and splendid bark, which, tossed by the winds and floating on the waves, still exhibits, in its vast but shattered fragments, specimens of high ingenuity and powerful combination.

He was the first, himself, to feel that his faculties were failing; and his brilliant spirit sunk at once under the painful and humiliating conviction. It was in vain that his family and his friends attempted to argue him out of this belief of a mental decline; against which, however, he struggled, by occasionally affecting to resume his art with all his wonted ardour. When they talked kindly but idly, he only shook his head significantly; and, in reply to some of their common-places of regret and condolence, was wont to answer, “Questo interviene à chi vuol dipingere e scrivere per l’eternità.” “It is the destiny reserved for those who would paint and write for eternity”—a bold, but in him not an unfounded boast! His family physician, and those who had most influence over him, endeavoured to dissuade him from all mental as well as manual occupation. His books and easel were removed, and he gradually sunk into a listless indolence, strongly contrasted to the wonted

* The author of these pages has not been able to discover the fate of these caricatures. Baldinucci says the Marchese Donato Guadagnata of Rome had a volume of his (Salvator’s) designs, to the number of eighty, and ten sketches in small pictures. Many of the subjects were incidents in the lives of the ancient philosophers; others were landscapes (veramente bellissime), and others were portraits, some “di colpi caricati,” &c.

† It is evident, from the testimony of Baldinucci, that these caricatures were not undertaken in a satirical or malicious spirit; and that Salvator was urged to execute them by the friends who sat as originals. “Egli che per far caricature era in supremo grado eccellente, crede di non poterlo meglio servire che col fargli tutti di questi,” &c.

moral and physical activity of "one who," says Passeri, "till now was always so worthily occupied." A change in his complexion was thought to indicate some derangement of the liver, and he continued in a state of great languor and depression during the autumn of 1672; but in the winter 1673, the total loss of appetite, and of all power of digestion, reduced him almost to the last extremity; and he consented, at the earnest request of Lucrezia and his numerous friends, to take more medical advice. He now passed through the hands of various physicians, whose ignorance and technical pedantry come out with characteristic effect in the simple and matter-of-fact details which the good Padre Baldovini has left of the last days of his eminent friend.* Various cures were suggested by the Roman faculty for a disease which none had yet ventured to name. Meantime the malady increased, and showed itself in all the life-wearing symptoms of sleeplessness, loss of appetite, intermitting fever, and burning thirst. A French quack was called in to the sufferer, and his prescription was, that he should drink water abundantly, and nothing else but water. While, however, under the care of this Gallic Sangrado, a confirmed dropsy unequivocally declared itself; and Salvator, now acquainted with the nature of his disorder, once more submitted to the entreaties of his friends, and, at the special persuasion of the Padre Francesco Baldovini, placed himself under the care of a celebrated Italian empiric, then in great repute in Rome, called Doctor Penna.

Salvator had but little confidence in medicine. He had already, during this melancholy winter, discarded all his physicians, and literally "thrown physic to the dogs;" but

* Francesco Baldovini was a Florentine priest, and a devoted friend of Salvator Rosa. He is described as being "noted in the republic of letters" of that time—"Uomo notissimo nella repubblica delle lettere." But he must not be confounded with the admirable author of "*Il Lamento di Cecco da Varlunga*,"¹ a delicious little burlesque poem written in the *Lingua Contadinesca*, and still read with avidity in Italy. The prose of the Padre Francesco Baldovini is quaint and involved, and his opinions are bigoted and narrow.

¹ Francesco Baldovini, the author of "*Il Lamento di Cecco*," was born in 1654, and was consequently not twenty years of age when Salvator died.

hope, and spring, and love of life, revived together, and towards the latter end of February, he consented to receive the visits of Penna, who had cured Baldovini (on the good Padre's own word) of a confirmed dropsy the year before. When the doctor was introduced, Salvator, with his wonted manliness, called on him to answer the question he was about to propose, with honesty and frankness, viz. "was his disorder incurable?"

Penna, after going through certain professional forms, answered "that his disorder was a simple, and not a complicated dropsy, and that therefore he was curable."

Salvator instantly and cheerfully placed himself in the doctor's hands, and consented to submit to whatever he should prescribe. "The remedy of Penna," says Baldovini, "lay in seven little vials, of which the contents of one were to be swallowed every day." But it was obvious to all, that, as the seven vials were emptied, the disorder of Salvator increased; and on the seventh day of his attendance, the doctor declared to his friend Baldovini, that the malady of his patient was beyond his reach and skill.

The friends of Salvator now suggested to him their belief, that his disease was brought on and kept up by his rigid confinement to the house, so opposed to his former active habits of life; but when they urged him to take air and exercise, he replied significantly to their importunities, "I take exercise! I go out! if this is your counsel, how are you deceived!" At the earnest request, however, of Penna, he consented to see him once more; but the moment he entered his room, he demanded of him, "if he *now* thought that he was curable?" Penna, in some emotion, prefaced his verdict by declaring solemnly, "that he should conceive it no less glory to restore so illustrious a genius to health, and to the society he was so calculated to adorn, than to save the life of the Sovereign Pontiff himself; but that, as far as his science went, the case was now beyond the reach of human remedy." While Penna spoke, Salvator, who was surrounded by his family and many friends, fixed his penetrating eyes on the physician's face, with the intense look of one who sought to read his sentence in the countenance of his judge ere it was verbally pronounced;—but that sentence was now passed! and Salvator, who seemed more struck by surprise than by apprehension,

remained silent and in a fixed attitude! His friends, shocked and grieved, or awed by the expression of his countenance, which was marked by a stern and hopeless melancholy, arose and departed silently one by one. After a long and deep reverie, Rosa suddenly left the room, and shut himself up alone in his study. There in silence, and in unbroken solitude, he remained for two days, holding no communication with his wife, his son, or his most intimate friends; and when at last their tears and lamentations drew him forth, he was no longer recognizable. Shrunk, feeble, attenuated, almost speechless, he sunk on his couch, to rise no more!

If the motive of this self-incarceration and rigid abstinence originated in his stoical principles—if he had resolved to meet death half way, and to escape the lingering sufferings of a slow and mortifying decline*—he had nearly effected his purpose. His long fast had not only preyed on his vital functions, it had enfeebled and laid waste all that remained of his mental energies; and the drooping sadness that bent down his harassed spirit and exhausted frame was mistaken by the bigoted, or misrepresented by the malignant, as the timidity and despair of a conscience ill at ease. The kind and shallow Baldovini saw nothing in the melancholy of Salvator, but the fear of purgatory, or the apprehension of more permanent sufferings; and he consoled him, or endeavoured to do so, by assuring him that the devil had no power, even in hell, over those who had been baptized by the holy name of Salvator. “While I spoke thus,” (says the good Padre,) “Salvator smiled.”

In this death-bed smile, (the last, perhaps, ever given by Salvator to human absurdity,) there is something singularly characteristic and affecting. For this depression of spirit, the Padre Passeri saw another cause, more influential than even the terrors of purgatory. It was Salvator’s connexion with Lucrezia—a singular delicacy of conscience in an Italian of the seventeenth century! But the two clerical friends of Salvator did not overlook their calling in their friendship; nor forget that if the conscience of the dying did not calumniate their lives, there would be nothing left for the church’s intercession; and that its influence and revenues would rapidly decrease together.

* See his allusion to this in one of his letters.

It is asserted by all the biographers of Salvator, that he did not marry Lucrezia until his last illness. But what is most singular in the event is, that the Church itself stood opposed to the reparation he was anxious (though late) to make, to one who appears to have been blameless in every respect, save in her connexion with him; and he was obliged to have recourse to some influential persons, to obtain a licence from the Vicario to make that woman a wife, whom he had been so long permitted to retain as his mistress in the midst of his numerous ecclesiastical friends.

Life was now wearing away with such obvious rapidity, that his friends, both clerical and laical, urged him in the most strenuous manner, to submit to the ceremonies and forms prescribed by the Roman Catholic Church in such awful moments. How much the solemn sadness of those moments may be increased, even to terror and despair, by such pompous and lugubrious pageants, all who have visited Italy—all who still visit it—can testify.

Salvator demanded what they required of him. They replied, "in the first instance to receive the sacrament as it is administered in Rome to the dying." "To receiving the sacrament," says his confessor, Baldovini, "he shewed no repugnance (*non se mostrò repugnante*); but he vehemently and positively refused to allow the host, with all the solemn pomp of its procession, to be brought to his house, which he deemed unworthy of the divine presence. He objected to the holy ostentation of the ceremony, to its éclat, to the noise and bustle, and smoke and heat, it would create in the close chamber of the sick. He indeed appears to have objected to more than it was discreet to object to in Rome: and all that his family and his confessor could extort from him on the subject was, that he would permit himself to be carried from his bed to the parish church, and there in the humility of a contrite heart, would consent to receive the sacrament at the foot of the altar.

As immediate death might have been the consequence of this act of indiscretion, his family, who were scarcely less interested for a life so precious than for the soul which was the object of their pious apprehensions, gave up the point altogether; and from the vehemence with which Salvator spoke on the subject, and the agitation it had occasioned,

they carefully avoided renewing a proposition, which had rallied all his force of character and volition to its long-abandoned post.

The rejection of a ceremony which was deemed in Rome indispensably necessary to salvation, and by one who was already stamped with the Church's reprobation, soon took air; report exaggerated the circumstance into a positive expression of infidelity; and the gossipry of the Roman anterooms was supplied for the time with a subject of discussion, in perfect harmony with their slander, bigotry, and idleness.

"As I went forth from Salvator's door," relates the worthy Baldovini, "I met the Canonico Scornio, a man who has taken out a licence to speak of all men as he pleases. 'And how goes it with Salvator?' demands of me this Canonico. 'Bad enough, I fear.'—'Well, a few nights back, happening to be in the anteroom of a certain great prelate, I found myself in the centre of a circle of disputants, who were busily discussing whether the aforesaid Salvator would die a schismatic, a Huguenot, a Calvinist, or a Lutheran?'—'He will die, Signor Canonico,' I replied, 'when it pleases God, a better Catholic than any of those who now speak so slightly of him!'—and so I pursued my way."

The Canonico, whose sneer at the undecided faith of Salvator roused all the bile of the tolerant and charitable Baldovini, was the near neighbour of Salvator, a frequenter of his hospitable house, and one of whom the credulous Salvator speaks in one of his letters as being "his neighbour and an excellent gentleman."

On the following day, as the Padre sat by the pillow of the suffering Rosa, he had the simplicity, in the garrulity of his heart, to repeat all these malicious insinuations and idle reports to the invalid: "but," says Baldovini, "as I spoke, Rosa only shrugged his shoulders."

Early on the morning of the 15th of March, that month so delightful in Rome, the affectionate and anxious confessor, who seems to have been always at his post, ascended the Monte della Trinità, for the purpose of taking up his usual place at the bed's head of the fast-declining Salvator. The young Agosto flew to meet him at the door, and, with a countenance radiant with joy, informed him of the good

news, "that his '*Signor Padre*' had given evident symptoms of recovery, in consequence of the bursting of an inward ulcer."

Baldovini followed the sanguine boy to his father's chamber. But, to all appearance, Salvator was suffering great agony. "How goes it with thee, Rosa?" asked Baldovini kindly, as he approached him.

"Bad, bad!" was the emphatic reply. While writhing with pain, the sufferer after a moment added:—"To judge by what I now endure, the hand of death grasps me sharply."

In the restlessness of pain, he now threw himself on the edge of the bed, and placed his head on the bosom of Lucrezia, who sat supporting and weeping over him. His afflicted son and friend took their station at the other side of his couch, and stood watching the issue of these sudden and frightful spasms in mournful silence. At that moment a celebrated Roman physician, the Doctor Catanni, entered the apartment. He felt the pulse of Salvator, and perceived that he was fast sinking. He communicated his approaching dissolution to those most interested in the melancholy intelligence, and it struck all present with unutterable grief. Baldovini, however, true to his sacred calling, even in the depth of his human affliction, instantly dispatched the young Agosto to the neighbouring Convent della Trinità, for the holy Viaticum. While life was still fluttering at the heart of Salvator, the officiating priest of the day arrived, bearing with him the holy apparatus of the last mysterious ceremony of the Church. The shoulders of Salvator were laid bare, and anointed with the consecrated oil; some prayed fervently, others wept, and all even still hoped; but the taper which the Doctor Catanni held to the lips of Salvator, while the Viaticum was administered, burned brightly and steadily! Life's last sigh had transpired, as religion performed her last rite.

Between that luminous and soul-breathing form of genius and the clod of the valley, there was now no difference; and the "end and object" of man's brief existence was now accomplished in him, who, while yet all young and ardent, had viewed the bitter perspective of humanity with a philosophic eye, and pronounced even on the bosom of pleasure,

“Nasci pœna—Vita labor—Necesse mori.”

On the evening of the day of the 15th of March, 1673, the all that remained of the author of *Regulus*, of *Catiline*, and of the *Satires*—of the gay *Formica*, the witty *Co-viello*!—of the elegant composer, and the greatest painter of his time and country—of *Salvator Rosa*! was conveyed to the tomb, in the church of *Santa Maria degli Angioli alle Terme*, that magnificent temple! unrivalled even at Rome in interest and grandeur, and which now stands as it stood when it formed the *Pinacotheca* of the *Thermæ* of *Diocletian*! There, accompanied by much funeral pomp,* the body of *Salvator* lay in state: the head and face, according to the Italian custom, exposed to view. All Rome poured into the vast circumference of the church to take a last view of the painter of the Roman people! the “*Nostro Signor Salvatore*” of the *Pantheon*: and the popular feelings of regret and admiration were expressed with the usual bursts of audible emotion, in which Italian sensibility on such occasions loves to indulge. Some few there were, who gathered closely and in silence round the bier of the great master of the *Neapolitan School*; and who, weeping the loss of the man, forgot for a moment even that genius which had already secured its own mead of immortality. These were *Carlo Rossi*, *Francesco Baldovini*, and *Paolo Oliva*, of whom each returned from the grave of the friend he loved, to record the high endowments and powerful talents of the painter he admired, and the poet he revered. *Baldovini* retired to his cell to write the “*Life of Salvator Rosa*,” and then to resign his own; *Oliva* to his monastery, to compose the epitaph which is still read on the tomb of his friend; and *Carlo Rossi* to select from his gallery such works of his own beloved painter, as might best adorn the walls of that chapel now exclusively consecrated to his memory.

On the following night the remains of *Salvator Rosa* were deposited, with all the awful forms of the Roman Church, in a grave opened expressly in the beautiful vestibule of *Santa Maria degli Angioli alle Terme*. Never did the ashes of departed genius find a more appropriate rest-

* “Fu il giorno seguente con magnifica pompa funebre esposto nella Chiesa della Madonna degli Angioli alle Terme,” &c.—*Pascoli*.

ing-place! The Pinacotheca of the Thermæ of Diocletian had once been the repository of all that the genius of antiquity had perfected in the arts; and in the vast interval of time which had since elapsed, it had suffered no change, save that impressed upon it by the mighty mind of Michael Angelo!*

The tomb of Salvator Rosa is surmounted by his bust; and on the monument raised to his memory, by the filial piety of his son Agosto, may be read the following inscription:†—

D. O. M.
SALVATOREM ROSAM NEAPOLITANUM
PICTORUM SUI TEMPORIS
NULLI SECUNDUM,
POETARUM OMNIUM TEMPORUM
PRINCIPIBUS PAREM,
AUGUSTUS FILIUS
HIC MOERENS COMPOSUIT.
SEXAGENARIO MINOR OBIIT
ANNO SALUTIS MDCLXXIII.
IDIBUS MARTII.

CHAPTER XI.

SALVATOR, according to Passeri, though not above the middle stature, exhibited in his movements much grace and activity. His complexion, though dark, was of that

* Of the original vastness of the Baths of Diocletian, some idea may be formed in the present day, by the ground they occupied being covered by villas, gardens, churches, and monasteries. The principal hall of the Thermæ, the Pinacotheca, (so called from its having contained the finest specimens of painting and sculpture, at a period when it was said there were more statues than men in Rome,) was, with its gigantic columns, (each of one solid piece of granite,) standing in perfect preservation, when Pius IV. resolved on converting it into a Christian temple. Fortunately the few changes to be effected were committed to the superintendence of a genius, itself of the true antique mould, and the Santa Maria degli Angioli owes it to Michael Angelo, that of all the churches of the Christian capital, it stands unrivalled in its simple majesty and noble proportions.

Near the tomb of Salvator Rosa rises that of his great contemporary Carlo Maratti, "both," says the Cicerone of the church (a monk of the adjoining convent of the Certosa, "both *Valenti Pittori*."

† Crescimbeni, in his "*Storia della volgare Poesia*," asserts, that this inscription was composed by the General of the Jesuits, Paolo Oliva.

true African colouring, which was far from displeasing; his eyes were of a deep blue and full of fire; his hair, black and luxuriant, fell in undulating rings over his shoulders. He dressed elegantly, but not in the court fashion; for he wore no gold-lace or superfluous finery. Bold and prompt in discourse, he intimidated all who conversed with him; and none ventured openly to oppose him, because he was a tenacious and stern upholder of the opinions he advanced. In the discussion of precepts, erudition, and science, he kept clear in the first instance from the minutiae of particulars, but, adhering to generals, he watched and seized his moment to rush into his subject, and make his point good. It was then he shewed himself well furnished for the discussion, and this little artifice he practised with infinite skill. He had won over many friends and many partisans to his own way of thinking; and had also raised against him many enemies, who attacked his opinions. Between these parties disputes frequently arose in his assemblies, which sometimes led to scandalous ruptures.

Many of his followers had joined him from coincidence of taste, and others merely for notoriety, and to obtain the reputation of notable persons, by associating with Salvator Rosa. The post which he held in his profession was one of high esteem; because he knew how to maintain his dignity with courtesy, and was, generally speaking, only to be won by prayers and entreaties.*

His school produced but few worthy successors, because his ambition never led him to surround himself with pupils; although it is true many have aped and affected to imitate him, but at an immeasurable distance. Bartolommeo Torrigiani† alone came near him in his aerial tints, but he died young. Some noisy picture-brokers (hucksters, "*Rivenduglioli*"), however, would have puffed this painter up to an equality with his master, when they had his landscapes on hand! Ghesolfi Milanese (his other pupil), a man of talent and reputation, particularly in perspectives with little figures, acknowledges himself deeply indebted

* Passeri.

† "*Bartolommeo Torrigiani fu scolaro di Salvator Rosa, e di poco inferiore al maestro nel paesaggio, ma nelle figure gli rimase a dietro assai, non avendo mai saputo accordarle.*"—*Ticozzi*.

to the instructions of Salvator, and in truth he has drunk deeply of his good maxims, which included many of the perfections of the art and the pencil. In addition to these pupils of Salvator's School mentioned by Passeri, one of whom was living when he wrote, Salvator had two others besides his son Augustus, viz. Pietro Montanini, and a young Englishman of the name of Cook;* but it was by precept only he instructed them, for none ever saw him paint: ("non voleva esser veduto da alcuni," says Pascoli.)

His imitators, however, have been countless; and it is supposed, that more than a fourth of the small landscapes ascribed to him, have been executed by those who rather exaggerated his faults than copied his merits. Of those who closely followed him both in his defects and his excellences, the most justly celebrated is the Cavaliere Fidenza of Rome;† but in all, the master-genius—the power of invention—was wanting; and the best were but tame and servile imitators of the great and unrivalled original.

While the public character, the person, manner, and exterior modes of Salvator Rosa, such as he appeared in what is called the world, have been treated with amplitude by Passeri, others of his biographers have entered more deeply into the domestic qualities, the temperament, and daily habits of the private individual: and the *home* character of genius is always interesting. A thousand individual traits in the various biographical details, and above all in the private letters of Salvator Rosa, speak a man full of those warm and zealous affections which convert predilection into passion, and tinge even the most moderate sentiments with the ardour of enthusiasm. Headlong in his enmities as in his friendships, his bitterness to

* "Harry Cook went into Italy, and studied under Salvator Rosa."—*Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting*.

It has been already observed in these pages, that the genius of Salvator Rosa was always justly estimated in England. Philip Pont, in his Views of Derbyshire, closely imitated his manner, which he made his peculiar study. "Our painters," says Horace Walpole, "draw rocks and castellated mountains and precipices, because Virgil gasped for breath in Naples, and Salvator Rosa wandered among Alps and Apennines."—*Ibid*.

† The most learned *cognoscenti* in the art have purchased Fidenza's landscapes as originals of Salvator's: some, as such, have found their way to England and Ireland.

those he hated was finely contrasted by his tenderness to those he loved. In his private and domesticated manners, he is said to have been full of amenity, pleasant humours, and confidential: "For the rest," says Pascoli, (who came to Rome while the impressions Salvator had made in its circles were still fresh,)—"For the rest, though Salvator was by temperament both sensual and sarcastic, those faults were compensated by virtues, which made them the more to be lamented, if not to be excused. For he was charitable, alms-giving, and generous; gracious and courteous; a decided enemy to falsehood and fiction, greedy of glory, eminent in all the professions to which he addicted himself, yet still prizing his talent more in that department of the arts, in which he did not excel, than in that line in which he had no competitor."

Salvator Rosa had two sons by Lucrezia. Rosalvo, the elder, died young at Naples.* Agosto, his heir, on the death of his father became possessed of a respectable and most interesting property. According to various authorities, he found himself master of eight thousand scudi in specie; letters of credit on the bank of the Rossi for seven thousand more (the accumulated prices of pictures which Salvator had painted for, and left in the hands of this liberal and devoted friend); a collection of pictures (some few of Salvator's own were among the number); a library of valuable books; a quantity of rich furniture; a volume of Salvator's original designs, forming, says Pascoli, "un grosso volume,"† and his manuscript writings, none of which, not even his Satires, were published till after his

* Passeri says that Salvator sent his son Rosalvo to Naples to his brother ("ad un suo fratello"), where he died of the plague. This is the only mention made of this brother in any of the lives of Salvator Rosa. I have heard traditionally that he was a monk.

† The drawings of Salvator Rosa are extremely scarce. The value placed even on his most careless sketches may be judged by the following anecdote:—Calling one day on Lorenzo Lippi at Florence, he was detained some time waiting for his friend, and to beguile his *ennui*, he took up a card and made a sketch on it. This card has reached posterity, and is now carefully preserved in the lid of a snuff-box, in the possession of the Prince Rozoumofski, a Russian noble. In the Baron Denon's vast and precious collection of original drawings, there is but one of Salvator's. "Et encore," observes the accomplished collector, in a letter to the author of this work—"encore n'a-t-il pas un degré de caractère, qui puisse faire juger de ce maître?"

death. The whole of this property was accumulated since the period of his last return to Rome.

When Pascoli wrote his life of Salvator Rosa, which, with his other lives, was published in 1731, Agostino Rosa was still living in his father's house, on the Monte della Trinità, with one son and one daughter. "The former," says Pascoli, "applied himself to architecture, and some part, if not all, of the genius of Salvator was still preserved in his descendants; for though he did not himself practise architecture as a profession, he understood it perfectly."

The Chevalier D'Agencourt, in his account of his visit to Rome, boasts of having "slept in Rosa's bed, and even within his very curtains." When Dr. Burney resided in Rome in 1770, he found Salvator's house in the Monte della Trinità inhabited by his great-grand-daughter, from whom he purchased that volume of MS. music and poetry (the compositions of her illustrious ancestor), which, but for the enterprising spirit of British genius, had probably never seen the light. The immediate descendants of Rosa, bearing his name, were in 1823 still living in Rome; but, as far as the author of this Life of their immortal progenitor could discover, they were ignorant of everything that concerned him, or unwilling to communicate the little of family tradition that might yet be rescued from oblivion.

To the patent of Salvator's merit as a painter, the successive generations of nearly two centuries have set their seals, and time and posterity have long consecrated the judgment passed on his works by such contemporary critics as were not influenced by envy, nor warped by prejudice and party-spirit. The opinions of Passeri (and the disciple and worshipper of Domenichino was no incompetent judge), of Baldinucci, of Pascoli, and of many other virtuosi of his own times, or of those which immediately followed them, are on record. The qualified eulogium of Sir Joshua Reynolds (who, in refusing Salvator that grace which none but himself ever denied, accords him "all the sublimity and grandeur of the Sacred Volume from which he drew his subject of Jacob's Dream,"*) has long been before the

* The peculiar characteristic of Salvator's figures is that spirited grace, as conspicuous in his banditti as in his Jason and St. George; the grace of move-

British public; and to such testimonies may be added, the hitherto unpublished opinion of one, from whose refined taste and superior judgment, few in the present day will be inclined to appeal—I mean the Baron Denon. In a letter to the author, this venerable Corypheus of the arts observes of Salvator, that he was “grand compositeur, dessinateur spirituel, penseur poetique, grand paysagiste,* et tout-à-fait original dans ce genre; vaste et grandiose en tout. Les arbres sur le devant ont une audace, pour ainsi dire, impertinente, qui leur donne de la noblesse,” &c.

As an engraver, he had all the originality of manner which characterized his paintings; and notwithstanding the praises which have been lavished on the execution of his etchings, the designs or conceptions they embodied were still superior to the manual dexterity displayed: his touch was light, bold, and spirited; though he is accused of wanting the force and energy that characterized his pencil. He never engraved any pictures but his own.†

As a musical composer, his merits must be estimated by the progress which the most charming of all the arts had made in his own times. The music of Milton’s modern Orpheus,

“Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent,” &c.

would, in the present day, be as little palatable to an English public, as the strains of Dante’s favourite minstrel Casseli would be endurable to the *cognoscenti* audience of the “San Carlos.” It is enough to establish the musical genius

ment, not of repose. Sir J. Reynolds has also observed, that “Salvator had that sort of dignity which belongs to uncultivated nature, but nothing of that which belongs to the grand.” Of this singular criticism, the Catiline Conspiracy, and his Saul and Witch of Endor, afford the best refutation. His remarks on his landscape are more just. Between the subjects which he chose, and his manner of treating them, “everything,” says Sir Joshua, “was of a piece; rocks, trees, sky, even his handling, have the same rude and wild character which animates his figures.”—*Discourse*, vol. i. p. 133.

* Of his colouring, the Baron Denon observed (in reply to a question of the author’s), “Il est plus coloriste dans ses paysages que dans ses tableaux d’histoire; mais ces derniers sont plus profondément pensés.”

† The original plates, nearly worn out, were sold by the present family to the government for 1000 dollars, and in 1823 were in the Papal Calcographic office. Copies were, however, piratically executed by Rainaldi. Volpato, Strange, and Boydell, have engraved his principal pictures.

of Salvator Rosa,* that his compositions were pronounced by the most learned and elegant musical professor of the last century, to be "in point of melody superior to most of the masters of his time."† Of his skill in architecture (which, however, he never practised professionally,) we have only a passing observation of Pascoli, who asserts that "he understood it perfectly."

As a comic actor, an improvvisatore, a performer on many musical instruments, and (to use a French term for a talent, which for obvious reasons has no fit English one) as a delightful *causeur*, the merits of Salvator Rosa must be taken upon trust! These brilliant qualifications, which render life so much more easy and delectable, than higher talents and sublimer powers, have nothing to do with time—they belong to the moment, and are equally evanescent; but the testimony which all who witnessed these personal accomplishments of the great poet-painter bear to their excellence, endows him with a sort of individual and characteristic fascination, which perhaps, in the "hey-day of his life," he would not have exchanged for the immortality which awaited him, when such light and dazzling acquirements should be inevitably forgotten.

As a prose writer, (if his familiar letters written *à trait de plume* to intimate friends on intimate subjects, and never intended for publication, can entitle him to that epithet,) there is a something English and natural in his manner of expressing himself, which can only be estimated by those

* While the air of "Vado ben spesso," and others of Salvator Rosa's compositions are to be found in the elegant little musical albums of half the fashionables of London, with quadrilles by Queens, and waltzes by Duchesses, in Rome, all to whom I applied (either personally or through her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire, and my friend General Cockburn,) denied that Salvator ever had composed a bar: "they had never even heard he was a musician." They had probably never heard of the works of Baldinucci, Passeri, Pascoli, and other pictorial biographers, which are known and read everywhere, *but at Rome*. Two of Salvator's airs will be found at the end of this volume.

† Of this, his beautiful air, preserved by Dr. Burney, of

"Star vicino al bel' idol che l' ama,"

is a sufficient proof. Compared with the monotonous drone of Harry Lawes's celebrated love ditty.

"A lover once I did espy,"

it is quite a modern melody; and yet Lawes and Salvator were contemporaries.

who are acquainted with the wretched prose style of that day in Italy, or by comparing his epistolary correspondence with the letters extant of Nicholas Poussin, Lanfranco, Domenichino, &c. In this, as in every other respect, Salvator Rosa had "*devancé son siècle*."

His erudition was not only profound—it was cumbrous; and his teeming memory stands accountable for the pedantry which occasionally disfigures the best of his graver poems, at the moment that he attacks the same fault in others. He was accused by his detractors and critics of not knowing Greek. If this be true (and it does not appear that it is), his modern readers will be rather thankful that he did not, from the over use he has made of his acquirements in that dead language of which he was the master.

The more difficult and delicate task remains, to speak of Salvator as a poet; not, however, with reference to the language in which he wrote, to detect his Neapolitan patois, or lament that deficiency in "*Tuscanisms*," which drew, and still draws down upon him the anathemas of the Della-Cruscan School. To attempt such an analysis would argue a presumption, only to be equalled by the bad taste which could lead to so flagrant a violation of literary discretion.

It is the poetical genius of Salvator Rosa, and the intellectual character of his poetry, with reference to the age in which he lived, and to contemporary writers, which alone can come with propriety under the discussion of one, who, as a foreigner, must be an inadequate judge of verbal merits and defects, but who may not be insensible to the force and originality of ideas, which are admirable and original, in whatever language they are clothed.

To the political struggles of the sixteenth century in Italy—struggles which gave such an impetus to the national genius, and roused the intellectual energies of the people to their fullest possible development, succeeded the utter subjection and dead repose which have ever hung upon the nations which have submitted to the house of Austria. From the early part of the seventeenth century, the liberty of speaking, of writing, almost of thinking, was controlled in Italy by the most fearful inflictions, civil and religious. The Inquisition became the tribunal where all literary merit was adjudged; and the galleys or the scaffold awaited that daring genius, who, by the least freedom of inquiry, led to the discovery of those truths which it was the sup-

posed interest of the continental despots to bury in eternal oblivion. Even the priesthood no longer found safety in their habit, when they violated, by the faintest indiscretion of independent opinion, the settled order of things. The Spanish Viceroy of Naples tortured or persecuted such of the Italian clergy as adopted the Council of Trent, in opposition to the decrees which had issued from the Escorial. All public meetings were prohibited; all forbidden books found in the libraries of private individuals, subjected their owners to the most rigorous punishments (and all books worth reading were then in the Pope's Index Expurgatorius). Throughout all Italy, the moral activity and intellectual force of the people were gradually, and by a fatal necessity, confined to the discussion of contemptible futilities, and devoted to a species of literary trifling, whose fatal influence is still visible in those trivial productions and critical disputes, which, even now, are the sole products of the shackled press in that heavily oppressed country. In this epoch of debased intellect, the Cavaliere Marini, the Poet Laureat of blue-stockings Queens and rhyming Pontiffs, contributed by his vogue and influence to deteriorate all that remained of the pure taste and stern style which were conspicuous in the elegant versification of Lorenzo de' Medici, and in the nervous prose of Machiavelli.

The genius of Marini was so well suited to the age in which he flourished, that he became the model and authority for all the endless conceits and affected verbosity of the "Rimatori Seicentisti;"* and the laboured peculiarities,

* The boldness with which Salvator attacked the poetical mania and mannerism of the day, evinces a moral courage, infinitely more rare than mere animal hardihood. After declaring in his "Poesia" that he has so much to condemn that he scarcely dares begin, he suddenly bursts forth:—

"Offre alla mente mia ristretto insieme
Un indistinto Caos vizi infiniti,
E di mille pazzie confuso il seme.
Quindi i traslati, e i paralleli arditi:
Le parole ampollose, e i detti oscuri,
Di grandezze e decoro i sensi usciti.
Quindi i concetti ò mal espressi, ò duri
Con il capo di bestia il busto umano,
Della lingua stroppiata i mori impuri
Dell' iperboli quì l' abuso insano,
Colà gl' inverisimili scoperti,
Lo stil per tutto effeminato, e vano," &c.

La Poesia.

forced metaphors, and wretched mannerisms, which his works brought into fashion, succeeded universally to those bold unfettered effusions of genius, which, in the immortal works of Ariosto and Tasso, had scared the puerile judgments of the incorporated academicians of Italy. Even England, under the Stuarts, caught the infection of Marini's manner; and Cowley, and other metaphysical poets of his time, imitated his false conceits and forced metaphors, and mistook his subtlety for wit, and his hyperbole for sublimity. Deep thought and strong expression were now interdicted by political institutes; to write forcibly was to incur proscription; and a war of words, a contest upon accents, was waged with a species of vindictive fury, whose violence was the result of restless powers compressed within a narrow sphere, which painfully contrasted the natural activity of the Italian spirit with the nullity of the interests of the people.*

Towards the middle of the seventeenth century the whole literary armament of Italy was drawn out in battle array, to defend a Sonnet of Marini, or to attack an Idyllium of Murtola, his rival; while the poetical imagination of the most imaginative people in Europe was restricted in all its conceptions within the pale of the heathen mythology, in whose worn-out combinations nothing could be found (as the Italian literary licence runs) "*contro la Santa fede Catolica*," against the holy Catholic faith.

It is notable, therefore, that it was in the midst of this pitiable and self-satisfied mediocrity, this degraded and

* Of the pastoral poetry and madrigals then in fashion in Italy, the following is a fair specimen. It is by Achillini, of whom Sismondi observes, "Few writers ever attained to so high a degree of reputation during their lives, and few have afterwards sunk into more complete oblivion. Italy, at that time, languished under the dominion of bad taste, whose influence over the mind and the imagination seemed to stifle every other species of talent." —P. 271, vol. ii. of *Roscoe's Translation*.

"Col fior de' fiori in mano
 Il mio Lesbin rimiro
 Al fior respiro, e 'l pastorel sospiro.
 Il fior sospira odori
 Lesbin respira ardori.
 L' odor dell' uno odoro
 L' ardor dell' altro adoro,
 Ed odorando ed adorando i' sento
 Dal odor, dal ardor, ghiaccia, e tormento."

feeble state of the Italian intellect, that Salvator Rosa composed and recited his bold, vigorous, and poetical satires!—satires, which for the subjects they treated, and the manner in which they were written, had the singular merit of originality, at a moment when that particular style of composition was supposed in Italy to have reached its supreme point of perfection; and when all originality, as Salvator himself declared, was wholly banished from the literature of the day.*

The Italian language had been early applied to satire, as many of the passages in the “*Commedia*” of Dante prove. But the vein of bitter invective of this poet, which spared neither Princes nor Popes, was succeeded by a light and jocose satire, which the talents and works of Lorenzo de’ Medici, Franco,† Pulci, Berni, and Bentivoglio, long continued to preserve fresh and unrivalled in popular admiration. The satires of Ariosto, with all their interest and merit, were merely personal: they recorded his own story, the blighting influence of patronage, the misery of literary dependence, the captious tyranny of pretending superiors, and the unwilling submission of proud but indigent genius! Great applause had been won by Baldovini for his “*Lamento di Cecco da Verlunga*,” written in “*La lingua Contadinesca*,” or rustic dialect; and Della-Cruscan critics had crowned Menzini as the prince of Italian satirists, of the seventeenth century.

But these writers, though named satirists, scarcely ventured beyond jesting lightly with the lighter follies of mankind. They brought nothing of that deep feeling and philosophic spirit to bear upon their task, which distinguish the works of the painter-poet of Naples; and that poet was the first to attack the institutions of the corrupt society in which he lived, and to stigmatize the false conclusions and vicious modes they originated in all the relations of life.

* “*Tutti cantano omai le cose istesse;
Tutti di novità son privi affatto.*”

La Poesia—Satire di S. Rosa.

† “*Nicola Franco fu impiccato in Roma in età senile per aver fatte una satira contro il S. Pontefice, Pio Quinto.*”—*Nota alla Babilonia.*

“*Nicholas Franco was hanged at Rome in his old age, for having written a satire against Pius V.*” With him indeed, as with Juvenal, almost every line betrays the peculiar character of his inspiration.—*Facit indignatio verum.*]

Indignant at the obstacles which mediocrity threw in the way of his own consciously-merited success, he scorned to palter with the littleness of the age in which he lived; but fell as recklessly on the crimes of the great, as on the pretension and servility of the tribe of painters and poets, who wrote or daubed down to the level of their ignorant and vain-glorious patrons.* Of a burning and energetic temperament, a true child of liberty, he was impracticable to all restraint. Writing rather from his passions than his head, he poured forth his verses in the abundance of his teeming ideas, not only regardless of the pedantic rules and academic refinements of his own particular age, but too frequently even negligent of that indispensable correctness of style and selection of phrase, which the best ages of literature in all countries have rigidly and properly exacted from the master-geniuses they have produced.† The Satires of Salvator, resembling the poetry of Machiavelli more than that of any other Italian writer, are more remarkable for their depth of thought and vigour of expression, than for their grace or harmony: but their author had one singular advantage over the political statesmen of Florence:—he did not coldly laugh at the human race, while he endeavoured to correct its follies by exposing them. He was too much in earnest to be playful, too vehement and atrabilious not to wound sharply when he chose to strike. With more of Juvenal than Horace (though he imitated both) in the character of his genius, he occasionally displays, with the strength of the former, too much of his coarseness. But

* In attacking the poetasters of the day (which he did in some instances by name), their servile habits and style of composition, he observes of himself, that neither the Muse nor the love of fame has induced him to write; but that he is irresistibly spurred on by the violation of all moral laws which he beholds on every side:—

“Non vedi tù, che tutto il mondo è pieno
Di questa razza inutile e molesta,
Che i poeti produr sembra il terreno?
Per Dio, Poeti, io vò sonare a Festa:
Me non lusinga ambizion di gloria,
Violenza moral mi sprona e desta.”

† Salvator frankly and playfully alludes to this in his Poesia.

“Ed oggi il Tosco mio guasto idioma
Non avrà il suo Lucilio; oggi, ch' ascende
Ciascuno in Dirce a coronar la chioma.”

the prevailing manners of his day and country account for, without excusing, this unpardonable fault; which, though the least in the eyes of contemporary critics, must always lessen his merit in the estimation of a more refined and fastidious posterity. It is, however, notable, that if, like his great Latin prototype, he is sometimes offensive in terms, still he never falls into the immoral indelicacies of his influential countryman Marini, and is rarely guilty of those disgustingly coarse allusions to human depravity, with which the great Censor-critic of England charges the "melancholy Cowley," the "courtly Denham," the "witty Donne," and other contemporary British poets, who were deemed the "grace and ornament" of an English court, and are still ranked among the brightest luminaries in the galaxy of British classics. Salvator, indeed, never for a moment relaxes from the highest tone of Christian and philosophical morality. His works, whether of the pen or the pencil, were all in alliance with Virtue and her cause; and he neither spares Ariosto nor Giulio Romano (whom he so much admired), when expressing his abhorrence of that perversion of genius, which lends its mighty powers to the corruption of society by pandering to its passions. The immediate precursor of Filicaja, he was the first who dared to write in the cause of liberty, and to expose the abuses in morals and manners which result from despotism in government; and this, too, after a century of timid silence upon such perilous subjects, which, even now to treat, would be to incur the horrors of an Italian dungeon, or an Hungarian fortress.*

* His noble burst of indignation against the crimes of the great and the miseries of the lowly, in his poem of *La Poesia*, exhibits an almost superhuman courage, considering the age and circle in which he lived.¹

¹ "Dite di non saper qual più riceva
 Seguaci, o l' Alcorano, od il vangelo,
 O la strada di Roma o di Geneva.
 Dite che della fede è spento il zelo
 E che à prezzo d' un pan vender si vede
 L' onor, LA LIBERTA, l' anima, il cielo :
 Che per tutto interesse ha posto il piede,
 Che della Tartaria fino alla Betica
 L' infame Tirannia post' hà la sede."

La Poesia.

Furnished to repletion by his retentive memory with a variety of classical allusions, which he used perhaps too unsparingly, his pages were at least free from that scholastic subtilty and far-fetched thought, which disfigured not only the conceited *Seicentisti* of Italy, but almost all the poetry of contemporary writers in other countries; while in those allegorical personifications of which he was so fond, he displays all the poetical colouring and graphic touches which could be derived from the possession of an almost equal excellence in arts so closely allied.*

While the boldness and freedom with which he uttered opinions, always considered as heterodox in modern Italy, the courageous and uncompromising honesty with which he lashed at tyranny and hypocrisy, though surrounded by despots and inquisitors, evinced the highest tone of moral courage, his sarcasms, levelled at the heartless egoism of the great, and at the absence of all public spirit in the people, may redeem those occasional faults and obvious excesses in style and expression, which were probably no less engendered by the opposition he had to contend with, than by the natural vehemence of his own passions and the unbridled wildness of his imagination.

But with his learning, though it approached to pedantry, with his coarseness, though it had verged on indecency, and with his exaggeration, though it had passed the line of all known hyperbole—the Italian critics of the seventeenth century would have found no fault—for such blemishes were then deemed merits. The crime of Salvator Rosa—the splendid crime—was, that he had outstripped the age and nation in which he was condemned to live, by the frank expression of opinions which were then, as now, feared and condemned by all Italian governments, and this offence still

* Of this his description of Night in *L' INVIDIA*,¹ and his personification of the Genius of Painting and Envy, are fair illustrations.

¹ “Era la notte, e delle stelle i lussi
Cintia cingean che dal cornuto argento,
Sulla testa a più d' un scotea gl' influssi.
Tacea dell' aria il garrulo elemento,
Tacea dell' oceano il moto alterno
E soffiavan le spie, mà non il vento.”

continues to keep his memory under the ban of legitimate proscription; while

“ Gl' oziosi,
Gl' adornentati—i rozzi—e gl' umoristi
Gl' insensati—i fantastici, e gl' ombrosi,”*

of modern times, equally tenacious and uncompromising with their rulers, have not *yet* forgiven him his bitter attacks upon the tinsel taste and literary trifling of their forgotten predecessors.†

In despite, however, of literary and party feuds, of the opposition of the great and the attacks of the little, the poetical works of Salvator Rosa were read with avidity, and circulated universally, during his lifetime, and long before they were printed or published.‡ The brilliant success they met with from the impartial public served but to embitter the spirit of party against their author. When it was found no longer possible to decry the merits of his poems, his enemies denied they were his; and reports were industriously circulated that they were in part the compositions of Salvator Rosa's old and deceased friend, Fra Reginaldo Sgambati, and in part the works of Ricciardi. It was this calumny that produced his concluding Satire *L' Invidia* (one of his best and bitterest), and induced his friends to come forward and prove the authenticity of those Satires, which it was a perilous honour to father.

On this occasion, the Professor Ricciardi denied explicitly having any share in the composition of Salvator's poems; and Baldinucci produced scraps of the original MS. all blotted and corrected by Salvator's own hand. The two Maffei proved that the Satires were compiled and finished

* Salvator Rosa—*Satira Seconda*.

† Salvator was, I believe, the first who attacked the Della-Cruscan Academy, for its infamous conduct to the immortal Tasso.

“ Applaude ai Bavj, ai Mevj, arciasinoni,
Che non avendo letto altro che Dante,
Vogliono far sopra i Tassi i Salomoni:
E con censura sciocca ed arrogante,
Al poema immortal del gran Torquato
Di contrapporre ardiscono il Morgante.”

Poesia.

‡ The Satires, though circulated in manuscript, and universally read and admired throughout Italy, were not published till after Salvator's death, and then were dated from Amsterdam.

in their own palace and villa at Volterra; and the celebrated Francesco Redi (who, with a hundred others, had heard Salvator recite the Satires almost *al improvviso*,) declared that he had also seen them in the progress of their transcription, and had pointed out the Neapolitanisms and faults of language to Salvator, which he rectified at the moment with such promptness, facility, and fine adaptation, as none but the author could have done.*

Still, however, with all these honourable testimonies in their favour, the internal evidence of the poems themselves is the best proof of the identity of their author. "In fact," says a modern Italian critic, "Salvator, in his Satires, has given a striking portrait of himself: they contain the same vivacious sallies and acute *bon-mots*, which came out through all his comic recitations, his familiar letters (written to his friends), and his original conversation; and which obtained for him the esteem and affection of all the most accomplished persons of Rome and Florence.

While the professed Trecentisti and Della-Cruscans of the present day,† place Salvator Rosa in the second class of poets—while his works are anathematized by the "Parnasso Italiano," and "damned with faint praise" by those cold dry literary annalists, Tiraboschi and Crescimbeni,‡ there

* While Salvator submitted to the criticisms of the elegant and amiable Redi, he laughed openly at the pedantic pretensions of the Della-Cruscan *freluquets*. "As for the ancients," he says, "I adore their memory, and kiss the trace of their steps;" but for the Della-Cruscan purists,

"Di barbarie servile e pedantesca
La di lor poesia cotanto à carca,
Ch' è assai più dolce una canzon Tedesca.
Mà qui il mio ciglio molto più s' inarca:
Non è con loro alcuna voce Etrusca,
Se non è nel Boccaccio ò nel Petrarca;
E mentre vanno di parlare in busca
I Toscani Mugnai Legislatori
Gli trattano da Porci con la Crusca."

La Poesia.

† Life prefixed to the Satires of Salvator Rosa.

‡ Crescimbeni's observations on Salvator Rosa are worth quoting, as curious specimens of the Italian prose style of his day:

"Salvatore Rosa, Pittore, non poco accreditato, fu anche poeta satirico, e fiorì specialmente nel Pontificato di Clemento IX. Un volume di sue Satire fu impresso dopo sua morte, che seguì in Roma, e fu sepolito in Santa Maria degli Angeli," &c.

"S. Rosa, a painter of no small renown, was also a satirical poet, and

are even among those of the modern Italians, whose own principles are in full coincidence with the political opinions and philosophical views of Salvator Rosa, many who shrink from opposing their own private judgment in favour of the poet of liberty, to the decision of those authorized and "time-honoured" tribunals which condemned Torquato Tasso. But Italy is daily becoming more worthy of appreciating the genius of one, whom England has always cherished; nor can it be supposed, that they who now dare to admire the nervous strength and free breathings of an Alfieri—who dwell with enthusiasm on the bold, imaginative, and philosophical poetry of a Byron (of all modern English poets the one most read in Italy)—could remain insensible to the same quality of genius in a native poet, though marked by less polished forms, and draped in less modern modes. The fact is so much the contrary, that the Satires of Salvator Rosa are daily becoming more read and admired throughout Italy. His political opinions, his philosophy, his taste, all belong to the present times, as they were splendid exceptions to the tameness, ignorance, and literary degradation of those in which he flourished: and did he now live to illustrate Italy and her troubled dawn of regeneration with his powerful and brilliant talents, it may be presumed that the cause which led him to abandon the painted galleries of Rome for the murky tower of Masaniello, would still have directed his pencil and guided his pen in favour of that liberty which, like a pure and persecuted religion, has been miraculously preserved by some few warm and zealous worshippers, even in a region, where every institute has long been, and still is, armed against its existence.

flourished *more especially* in the reign of Clement IX. A volume of his Satires was published after his death, which happened at Rome, and was buried (the volume?) in the Santa Maria," &c.

* This perspicuous prose writer appears enraged at the encomiums bestowed on Salvator, in his epitaph by the General of the Jesuits, who, he says, speaks of Salvator's poetical merits, "con iperboli incredibilmente strabichevali."—*Istoria della Volgar Poesia*, &c.

It is curious that Tiraboschi only alludes to Rosa incidentally, in his eulogy on Benedetto Menzini (the protégé of Queen Christina of Sweden). "Nel satire Italiane egli (Menzini) non ha chi gli possa star à confronto, e solo ad esse si accostano quelle di Ludovico Adimari, da noi nominato poi anzi, e più di lungo quelle di Salvator Rosa poeta e pittore Napolitano, e più celebre per la pittura che per la poesia."

LETTERS OF SALVATOR ROSA

TO

DOCTOR BAPTISTA RICCIARDI.*

LETTER I.

It is clear that you labour under some malady of the eyes, by the judgment you have passed on the picture. Poor Albano! While he flattered himself that he had arrived at the last perfection of his art, Ricciardi pronounces of his picture, "that he never saw a worse." Go then, Rosa, and exchange with Ricciardi, one of your little landscapes for the picture of a man so famous in his art; and since Ricciardi is neither a professor of painting nor even the most clear-sighted of judges, you may hope that he will not only not be displeased, but be actually satisfied with his bargain. I must, however, be on my guard; since my most sapient and refined Metrodorus is so much more knowing than I am. That the three butterflies, however, should not please, is too much criticism, and quite beyond my comprehension; so e'en let us drop the subject. I give up in everything and for ever to your taste, since I find it so wide from the opinion which the whole world has long entertained of Albano; and I promise you, that another time I shall avoid the error of which you complain, and think a little better of my own works for the future.

I must now inform you, that I have sold my two great

* Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Pisa, and in his time a poet of some celebrity. Rosa had exchanged a landscape done by himself for Ricciardi, for a picture of Albano's, which forms the subject of this letter.

pictures to the Venetian ambassador, a nobleman of extraordinary judgment. When he came to see me, he took so much pains to express his esteem by other means than the mere common-place jargon of such great personages, that he compelled me to sell him the pictures at the first offer which he made me, through one of his gentlemen, an acquaintance of my own. The price is three hundred ducats, which, though less than the value of the labour, will answer my purpose well enough.

I beg, therefore, that should you stand in need of such a sum, you will make use of it as frankly and liberally as I offer it. I have often told you that I have nothing in the world that I would not willingly share with you; and if you do not now accept my offer, I shall think you take all this for mere profession. Ricciardi, he who has given you all his affections and his esteem should not withhold his purse.

If you send me the Canzone, I shall esteem it as the fruit of your genius; but I must frankly tell you, that when I saw it dedicated to Cascina,* I was ready to faint. Cascina was never made to be sung among the Volunni, the Baldinelli, and the Salvator Rosa's. You will understand me.

The heats are beginning to set in with great violence; and I must confess myself an ass for spending the summer at Rome. But the fault is yours; and whatever happens of it, you shall be made responsible for all, in good time.

Salute all our friends; and do me the favour of telling Signor Lanfreducci, that I have executed his commission and got the two airs copied; but his friend must call for them as we had agreed, for he lives at three miles distance from me. For the rest I know of nothing that will be more gracious to hear, than that you are in good health. Signora Lucrezia and Ursula embrace you conjointly with

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

July 6, 1652.

* Rosa complains that Ricciardi, after dedicating a canzonetta to him, should put Cascina's name at the head of another.

LETTER II.

My letter of last week was but short; and so they must all be that I shall write during the month of September, owing to the business I am about to relate to you. Signor Corsini has been appointed the French Nuncio, and after having considered what present he could make to the King on his arrival in France, he resolved last week that I should paint a great battle-piece,* exactly of the size of my "Bacchanals," with which you are acquainted;—that is to say, it must be fourteen palms in length and nine in width. For all this, I have but forty days allowed me, since Monsignor must leave Rome by the end of September; and knowing that no other painter here could have executed a work in so short a time, or applied himself to business during the heats of August, he has shut his eyes to the two hundred ducats, which I have asked as the lowest price: and I on the other hand have joyfully embraced the occasion, not only on account of the liberal price, but for the honour (which could not well have been greater) of sending one of my pictures from Rome as a present to the King of France!

But this is not all: Monsignor Gaetano, who is chosen the Spanish Nuncio, would also have given me five hundred scudi for my two pictures of the Philosophers, to carry them to the King of Spain, had they now been in my possession. What say you to this, friend? Am I not in the right road to glory? Are not my reputation and esteem among artists on the increase? I must, however, beg your indulgence, if in the mean time I write with unusual

* This is the unrivalled battle-piece now in the Royal Museum of France. It is curious to observe, that the diplomatic presents of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries chiefly consisted in the works of the great masters, as they now do in diamond snuff-boxes and costly toys. The favourable result to the arts is obvious, as well as the estimation in which good pictures were held. "In December, the Queen (of Charles I.) was brought to bed of a second daughter, named Elizabeth. To congratulate her Majesty's safe delivery, the Hollanders sent hither a solemn embassy and a noble present—a large piece of ambergris, two fair china basons, almost transparent; a curious clock, and four rare pieces of Tintoret's and Titian's painting."—*Whitelock*, p. 24.

brevity; for, in truth, my head is now as full of slaughter and uproar as if it belonged to Alecto herself.

Oh! how deeply the news of your brother's extravagance affected me. He was a man to whom I could have confessed my sins upon my knees. The worst too of the business is, that what he has done falls on your patrimony; a circumstance which I feel in my inmost heart. I hope, however, that you will not be greatly distressed: but, at all events, I am here to assist you; and I swear to you, that as long as I have a Giulio, the half of it shall be yours. Cheer up, therefore, and smile misfortune out of countenance. At present I am richer than all the Crœsuses and the Cæciliï together, and let that suffice, since I am yours heart and soul.

I repeat that you are wrong in supposing that the little oval picture is not by Albano, but by some Roman artist. It is most certainly his, though one of the last things he did, and executed under the disadvantage of old age; so you must have patience. If it has not indeed all the gusto I could wish, I am sure of this, that there is no one in this country who could do better. But, as I do not care to dispute with you at present on pictures, I suppose I must e'en make my account by painting you something of my own, and taking this one back again; will this please you, Signor Coccia?

As to the battle-piece of three and a half *braccie* by two, on which you desire that I should put a price, I shall give you my opinion as usual with perfect freedom. You know, I believe, my repugnance to the subject. It is one on which I have set my heart to excel all the painters who may desire to enter the lists with me, to say nothing of the great labour of such a work. If you choose, however, you may tell your friend, that out of friendship for you, it shall cost him but three hundred crowns: and I must tell you moreover, that, except at your suggestion, I would not undertake it at any price. You already know that I have almost made a vow not to paint any more such pictures, unless they are paid for at the rate of a Titian or a Raffael!

Father Cavalli* (who was with me yesterday) esteems you much: he is, in truth, a most worthy personage.

For the rest, dear Ricciardi, keep up your spirits, and believe in purse and person I am always yours.

The Signora Lucrezia, and Ursula salute you, as I do most affectionately all our friends. I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Tell me how Sign. Lanfreducci liked "Il Sonno."

August, 1652.

LETTER III.

This post brought no letter from you, which I am willing to attribute to some extraordinary occupation on your part. My picture sets off for France to-morrow, where I have only to hope it will succeed as well as it has done in Rome, which I may swear to you is as much as any modern picture (not to speak of the old masters) ever did; insomuch, that my reputation has taken an amazing spring. The book you ask for is not to be found; but our friend Signor Brunetti has already told you as much. At last, Ricciardi, I may say that I am restored to my ancient freedom. I have hitherto not had a day free from visitors since I finished my precious picture.

Remember me to our friend Signor Fabretti, and recall me to his good wishes, as also to those of the rest of your circle. Meanwhile, from my solitude, I remind you to write as often as you can, and to love me while you live. I embrace you affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 19th October, 1652.

LETTER IV.

DEAR FRIEND,

Your advice ever was, and ever will be, most welcome to me. With respect to my scraping together a little money, as well for the dignity of my reputation, as for the

* Ricciardi dedicated a canzone to P. Cavalli.

comforts of life, I must needs confess, that without money it is impossible that we artists can derive all the benefit from our labours that we seek and that we deserve; and I have resolved to use all possible diligence on my part, whenever Fortune is disposed to do hers. My picture is on its road to France, having met with all the success of which I have informed you. But tell me, could it have gone at a worse moment than the present, when the King has anything else in his head rather than pictures?

Well, these are pleasant speculations; not to speak of a thousand other teasing trifles respecting the price, which however are no trifles in their influence on my interests. Still I leave all to Heaven: as far as I am concerned I must be a gainer, if not in pecuniary matters, at least in reputation. Before this time you must have received a letter from me, in which I have explained my reasons respecting a journey to Naples in the ensuing Lent. I do not send you the sketches of the battle-piece, as it is necessary that I should keep them myself, to avoid repetitions on a future occasion. But if it is true that you are going on with your collection of designs, I must send you some trifle.

The Signora Lucrezia is near her confinement, and suffers much as usual. Both she and Ursula kiss your hands.

The Archdeacon is gone to the other world; Heaven grant him there more brains than he seemed to have in this world! I salute all friends, and embrace Signor Fabretti most affectionately, assuring you of my love.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, October 16, 1652.

A letter from Sign. Cespini* has appeared here extremely clever; and as it is full of my praises, pray thank him for it in my name.

LETTER V.

Gracious Heaven! I can scarcely believe that the letter received by this post is yours, after the six posts that have

* A Knight of San Stephano, and Professor of Law at Pisa.

come in without bringing me any such welcome favour, or even the accustomed substitute of a letter from Signor Cosimo. The curses I have bestowed upon dame Comedy* have been most tremendous, since it is she that has occasioned me this long fast. I have, however, had some revenge; since her tediousness has made her not a little tiresome. This defect I learned, before your letter, from the accounts given me by the Canonico da Scornio, my neighbour and an excellent gentleman. I wrote you lately a very long letter under the usual cover of Signor Fabretti, giving you a full account of my misfortunes, and of everything that has happened in the interval of your silence. Pray write to me, and let me know if my letter has arrived safe, and save me the annoyance of supposing it has fallen into other hands.

You will have heard of the horrible infamies of my enemies, who, under pretext of answering the Satires, have played the spy upon my privacy; but He who saw their intentions, and is truth itself, has turned things differently from their expectation; and so far so good. If the letter has not already got into your hands, use all diligence to recover it.

But to return to ourselves: imagine your friend all bile, spirit, and fire, as he is, suffering such indignities!! However, I must still strive to wear the mask of contempt and of patience, by considering that their fire is of straw, and that mine is asbestos.

My obligations to Signor Camillo Rubiera are great indeed: he is a gentleman of consummate worth; and I grieve, on such occasions, that my fortune is not equal to my spirit, but I must have patience, for I can now do no better; and only rest in the hope, that through the liberality of my friends I may be able to repay such benefits. Great God! what experience has not my adversity afforded me, in discovering the attachment of some, whose souls I little dreamed harboured so much benevolence and tenderness, and from whom I have reaped miracles of kindness. On the other hand, some there are whose swords I doubted not would have flown from their scabbards in my defence, yet who, when I put them to the proof, were silent as

* Ricciardi wrote several comedies, replete with much humour.

mates. Pray Heaven I may be able to profit in the future by the lessons thus taught in misfortune. But as God lives, I must for ever say, that a more affectionate heart than thine does not beat.

With respect to the designs for your scenes, I will take care of you.* The wood pieces especially I will do myself: for the rest, I hope you will be contented, as I have this morning engaged a famous Milanese perspective painter to do them. The landscape you might have next week, but we must wait the leisure of the other good man, that all may go together. Tell me if you go to Florence this summer, which I should think a pleasanter abode than Pisa.

The Padre Cavalli has been here; and, after much conversation, he told me, that "he knows no one who is more my well-wisher than Ricciardi, who speaks of me with infinite affection." Judge what pleasure I receive on such an attestation? You will hear from Signor Cordini the wishes of Signor Volunnio, who urges me to print, but who desires first to hear the whole of my Satires read. Imagine to what a length the kindness of an advocate, a friend of mine, extends! He wishes to get my cause before the Rota, in order, as he says, to immortalize himself by so singular a case. I have, however, dissuaded him from the enterprise, and prevailed on him not to speak on the subject. In truth he is an excellent person, and in the high road to pre-eminence in that court: his name is l'Avvocato Serroni, my most devoted friend.

You do not send me the idea for a picture, though I have asked it more than once. Do not, I beg of you, fail me; as I must have something ready for the ensuing festival.

I was exceedingly desirous that you should have Gheradelli's tragedy, and that you should agree with all the world in admiring the defence, even more than the work itself. It is really worthy of a great man. Have you remarked my design for the frontispiece, to which I did not choose to put my name? That infamous Schierabandolo is now saying, that he will print against the defence, in the teeth of that reverence which all men pay to the dead. With this, and many affectionate remembrances, I remain

* If those were scenes for Ricciardi's private theatre, how precious they would now be!

wholly yours, praying you to salute our friends. Signora Lucrezia and Ursula do the same by you.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, May —, 1654.

LETTER VI.

I am happy to learn that you are in Florence, and that you are enjoying the society of the most friendly of all beings, the Signor Cordini, whose conversation cannot fail to be a great comfort to you. Let me know if you mean to spend the summer there; and if Signor Cosimo is with you.

On my own affairs I shall not say a word. It is sufficient to tell you, that peace has been utterly banished from my mind on account of those same blessed Satires, which, ere I had commenced, I wish I had broken my neck. Everything continues to make me miserable, in spite of all the prudence and virtue in the world. Two, however, of my enemies have this week forsworn their persecution on hearing my last composition.*

I am surprised that you do not mention a visit you received at Pisa, from a certain Canonico Perruca,† a relation of Scornio's; for I know that he talks much of me and of my Satires, and that on his return to Rome there was much questioning of him (when it was known that he came from Pisa) concerning your talents, manner of composition, &c.

In a word, if I do not now die of despair, no man that ever lived, did so!‡

The designs for the scenes you shall have immediately—I mean for those which I was to make: I wait only till the perspective scene is finished, which I shall have this week from the hands of the best artist in that line. By the next post I will send everything together. If I alone had been concerned in this affair, it should have been done long ago.

* L' Invidia.

† A Canon of Pisa.

‡ In allusion to the persecutions he was undergoing on account of his Satires.

I do not mean to force or to persuade you in the business of Volterra : it is my duty to obey your wishes, and to seek only your satisfaction ; and this I promise that I will do. I am waiting with great anxiety for your idea for the picture ; but I am aware that I have already written to you frequently on this subject.

I will copy the Capitolo of Metosi * on the back of this letter to obey you. Pray let me know how long you intend to stay in Florence ? I think on the score of health you had better spend the summer there than in Pisa. Give me some intelligence of Signor Giulio, as I cannot get an answer to any of my letters to him : I know not, indeed, whether he be alive or dead.

For the rest, I commend myself to you ; assuring you that my greatest consolation lies in the reflection that I enjoy your friendship. Commend me, &c. &c. ; I kiss your hand.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, June 13, 1654.

LETTER VII.

How you have set my mouth watering with the account of your visit to Carfagnana, and your enjoyment of the wood scenery of that country, so congenial to my nature ! I swear to you, that I have not known happiness since I passed Monte Rufoli and Barbajana ; and yet these are nothing to the country of which you speak. In short, I never think of it without sadness, which is a proof that it afforded no ordinary occupation of mind, and health to the body. But let us turn to another subject : the very thought of this affects me even to tears. As to the little villa you offer me, I agree with you that it is a great prerogative to be master of a spot of one's own ; but then the vicinity of this to other habitations, spoils its beauty in my eyes, and the want of wood alone is sufficient to render every place imperfect in my estimation.

How grieved I am for the misfortunes of Signor Leoli ! I feel in my heart for his affliction : I beg you will make my

* A humorous poet.

compliments to him and to the rest of your amiable circle. I shall say nothing of the Canonico : it is sufficient for me that Bertoldino alone is in the comedy, and plays him such tricks, that they say he is determined either to return home or to go to France. If Signor Lancia has the same success in parts of this description, I shall be made up for the festivals.* For some weeks past I have been amusing myself with etching in aqua-fortis. In good time you shall see the results ; but it has not been my good fortune to reserve this employment for the solitudes of Strozzavolpe, as I had intended. I shall keep other things, however, in store to work on when the dove shall return to its resting-place.† In the meanwhile, remember that years are advancing, and that many disasters, which can be cheerfully supported in youth, are not so easily endured in age. I do not say this to urge you ; since I would fain believe that you have the same inclination that I have to avoid my losing altogether the little hope which remains to me in these matters. Compliments to Signor Cosimo and to your sister for me, and from the Signora Lucrezia. I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,
S. ROSA.

Rome, November 20, 1660.

LETTER VIII.

Before I commence this letter I have consigned the packet to the courier for Florence, directed to the care of Signor Simon Torrigiani, in the post-office at Florence, for Signor Giov. Battista Ricciardi at Pisa : with the little picture you will find the sketch of Polycrates in two pieces, which was designed at Strozzavolpe,—that of Alexander with Diogenes, Philolaus, and two others, (that is to say, one of Democritus, which is imperfect, and its companion Diogenes parting with his Cup,‡)—all excellently done, in the same manner as you directed.

* It appears from this, that Salvator was still a dramatic amateur, and occasionally performed in the private theatricals at Rome during the Carnival.

† An allusion to his meditated visit to his favourite Strozzavolpe.

‡ These are designs for etchings by Rosa.

With respect to your two pictures, your account of the place they are to occupy happens to be most opportune. As to that which you desire for your friend, the painters who do flowers moderately well are gone to Turin. There are some here who work better, but their prices are too high for this meridian ; and with such gentry I will have nothing to do.

As to landscapes and animals, here is nothing that pleases me—I mean on the score of price, although there are enough to surfeit you.

I am sorry your house does not answer, and that you are obliged to inhabit the attic. This will force you to repair the roof, before you commence what you have proposed.

I am delighted that you were never more free from your defluxion. I trust in Christ that it will disappear altogether, and leave you quite well. The remedy of not applying to study is the true panacea after all, the only means of preserving yourself ; so pray keep to it. Don't forget to embrace Signor Cosimo in my name, and to present compliments to all in your house ; and remember me gratefully to all your friends. Farfanicchio,* Signora Lucrezia, and myself, all kiss your hands affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 11th March, 1662.

LETTER IX.

I could not give you any account of my return from Loretto till this day. I arrived here on the sixth of May. I was for fifteen days in perpetual motion ! The journey was beyond all description curious and picturesque ; much more so than is the route from hence to Florence. There is a strange mixture of savage wildness and of domestic scenery, of plain and precipice, such as the eye delights to wander over. I can safely swear to you, that the tints of these mountains by far exceed all I have ever observed under your Tuscan skies ; and as for your Verucola, which I once thought a dreary desert, I shall henceforth deem it

* A term of endearment bestowed by him on his little son Agosto, who was now nine years old.

a fair garden, in comparison with the scenes I have now explored in these Alpine solitudes. O God! how often have I sighed to possess, how often since called to mind, those solitary hermitages which I passed on my way!—How often wished that fortune had reserved for me such a destiny! I went by Ancona and Sorolo, and on my return visited Assisa; all sites of extraordinary interest to the genius of painting. I saw at Terni (four miles out of the high road) the famous waterfall of the Velino; an object to satisfy the boldest imagination, by its terrific beauty. A river dashing down a mountainous precipice of nearly a mile in height, and then flinging up its foam to nearly an equal altitude! Believe, that while on this spot I moved not, saw not, without bearing you full in my memory and mind!

Send me an account of your health, and of all that concerns you; and forget not to embrace Signor Cosimo, and to make my remembrances to all, even to the very cats! A hundred, nay, a thousand salutations to our friends. With every good wish, I embrace you affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 13th May, 1662.

LETTER X.

I received your second envelope, which I forwarded like the other, but without having the good fortune to consign it to Signor Conti's own hands, whom I have never been able to see. As you say, nothing will be done to the purpose, unless by means of money. In this, however, I am not to blame; for I have told him I was ready to disburse whatever sum he demanded.

Some days ago, a certain priest called on me, and told me he had ten scudi to pay me, which, I suppose, is the money which you informed me Signor Marcantonio had remitted to Rome for this affair. I refused to take them, telling him, that when the money was demanded of me, I would then take it from him; and so there the thing rests. To tell you the truth, I do not like this business being in the hands of Brigitti: he is a bad subject, and of a bad reputation.

But since Signor Conti, whom you esteem, has chosen him, I shall say nothing about it; more especially, as I am in these matters a very Bertoldino, and abhor the name of a lawsuit.

I have finished the two pictures on which I was employed; the subjects are spick and span new and untouched, covering a canvas of eight palms in length. I have painted Pythagoras on the sea-shore, followed by his sect, in the act of redeeming a net of fish, which the fishermen are drawing to the shore, in order to restore them to their liberty:—the story is from Plutarch. The other is the same personage, who, after having passed a year in a subterranean abode, returns to a crowd of men and women of his own sect, who are waiting his arrival, and tells them he has been in Hell, where he has seen the ghosts of Homer and Hesiod, and a thousand other follies suited to the credulity of the times. These works I have executed, in order to their exhibition at the festival of San Giovanni Decollato. I will not fail to inform you of their success.

If in your reading you meet with any such subjects, pray note them, for they have great success. For the rest, I salute Signor Cosimo and his wife, with all the family; more especially my friend Salvatorino,* for myself, for Signora Lucrezia, and for Farfanicchio.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 29th July, 1662.

LETTER XI.

It is wholly superfluous to remind me of my last year's residence at Strozzevolpe. There passes not a day of my life in which my heart fails to celebrate in solemn commemoration even the most trifling incident that occurred there, and with no faint anguish, from the contrast of my present situation. The minutest particulars are recorded only to torment me; and I often chide Agosto, who remembers everything, for embittering my memory by reviving its impressions, especially in the present month, which was last year so pregnant with enjoyment. But let us talk of something

* His godson.

else. The festival of San Giovanni was, on many accounts, most solemnly observed. The task of preparation fell upon the house of Sacchetti, and the distribution of the pictures consequently on Pietro da Cortona, who is their *dependant*. There were exposed a vast many old pictures, as these noblemen got the flower of the most celebrated Roman galleries on the occasion. Besides my two pictures of Pythagoras, I had another larger one of "Jeremiah," who being thrown into prison by the king of Judah for predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, was restored to liberty at the prayer of the eunuch Ebedmelech. There were in it thirteen figures, as large as life. There were also two other pictures; of which, as they were not painted for this exhibition, I shall say nothing. And so much for the festival of San Giovanni!

I have lately read the life of Apollonius, written by Philostratus, with very great pleasure, from its singularity; but I have not found in it that sort of stuff, that imagery, which would paint well, and of which you spoke:—for this there should be some concentrated point of action. Pray, therefore, recommend me something else, in which I may find some incident out of the common, something which I may employ to the purpose.

Of the Pasticcio I remember nothing; but as you think it may succeed, I have nothing more to say. If it will bear the expense of coming and going, and you are contented, so am I.

Of the news of the day, I have not a word to tell you: that which is of public import, you already know by public report.

Respecting Signor Marcantonio's lawsuit, I do not know what has been done; for since I have paid Signor Conti the four scudi, I have seen nothing of him; and I, as all the world knows, never leave the Monte di Trinità. I go into town only when it is indispensably necessary.

The engravings are admired and much sought after, and are getting abroad into all parts. I have two great copper-plates prepared; but cannot bring myself to begin them, from the recollection of the labour bestowed on those of last year.

Heaven knows how I grieved for the loss of the boy,*

* Salvatorino, his godson, before alluded to.

both on account of Signor Cosimo's affliction and his wife's: but I comfort myself that the model is still vigorous—"Oh, blessed are they who," &c. &c. &c.

Do not fail in writing to Signor Giacomo and to Signor Minucci,* to salute them in my name, as well as to all our respected friends.

I come back once more to my request, that you will be diligent in seeking some good subject for a picture in the course of your readings. The Signora Lucrezia, Agosto, and myself, all kiss your hands affectionately.

Salutation to all your family,

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 16th September, 1662.

LETTER XII.

I write but four lines, to give you some tidings of myself, and to throw you into utter confusion for your total neglect of giving me your own, which, you know, is what I most desire in life.

I had great pleasure in learning that Brunetti has been with you, and that he satisfied in part your curiosity.

At the feast of St. John this year, I have exposed my great picture, (the figures as large as life,) taken from the history of the Catilinarian Conspiracy,† and done literally from the description of Sallust. It was excessively admired by the judges. I share my triumphs with you, as one should do with such a friend as you are! For the rest, send me news of your health; and believe, that nothing lives more warmly in my memory than the consciousness of your affection. God preserve you!

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, 8th September, 1663.

* Paolo Minucci wrote a comment on the Malmantile and was Salvator's host, during the pleasant visit to Florence, so often recorded.

† This picture, so long the principal treasure of the Casa Mentelli, is now in the Pitti palace of Florence.

LETTER XIII.

I am steeped deep in amazement, that such a mind as yours should have left it till this day to discover the worth and the temper of Salvator Rosa on the subject of friendship. But if all is not a jest, I must believe that the freedom with which you attack me proceeds from no other source, than that you consider me under particular obligations to you. If this *were* so, I should still only endure such freedom to the extent of what might be justifiable. I beg to remind you, that neither you nor I are gods; that you are but a man (a great man, indeed, in my estimation); but that I do not choose to be regarded as a mere nonentity* in the estimation of others.

So then, for having told you that I would not put more than two or three figures in your picture, you think it worth while to make this uproar—this foolish and imprudent quarrel? But to clear myself of an imputed fault, of which I could never have been guilty:—"Chiano, chiano!"† as the Neapolitans say. Now, supposing that, instead of two or three figures, I had restricted myself to *one*, I should have thought, Ricciardi, that even that one, coming from my hand, might have contented you, and have had sufficient merit to be a companion not only to your *ridiculous Bambocciato*, but ('fore God) even for the finest picture of the first-rate painter of the day. I confess that I do not understand your cabals, nor conceive what more you could expect than simply a picture of my painting; and in this, if I am to blame, as you declare, you should not have begged the execution of one in three several letters, as you know very well was the case.

But since my destiny forces me to enter into apologetic explanations with *you* (which I never could have imagined), I must tell you, that for some time back I have felt a great exhaustion and lassitude in painting, and that to avoid a total disgust to the art, I choose only facile subjects, which do not keep me long at the easel, and that I seldom exceed

* The term in the original is *Cetrivolo*, which has in Neapolitan idiom a signification which would not literally translate to answer the sense.

† Piano, piano!—"softly, softly!"

the number of figures I stipulated for with you ; if in this, you choose to use your ordinary mode of interpretation, and to attribute all to my extreme fault, you must give me leave to abate something of the opinion I have hitherto entertained of your highmindedness. Observe me, Ricciardi : if our contest were confined to mere questions of literature, I would most readily be brought to yield to you ; but when it comes to your treating me as an ingrate, as a man of narrow and calculating spirit, I shall show my teeth—if not to bite, at least to defend myself ; and it will be no difficult matter to prove the falsity of your accusation, since I am sufficiently known, if not to you, at least to the rest of the world.

I confess, that since we have known each other, you never so much displeased me as in this instance ; and I never could have imagined that such a friend as I have deemed you, could have offended me in a point on which I am confident I deserve infinite praise.

To a painter of my class and unfettered genius (the size of a picture excepted), everything should be left at liberty, (and so I should have acted by you in such a contingency) ; not presuming to teach the initiated, but consulting in everything the genius of the painter, and believing confidently that any trifle from a classical hand is worth the consideration of a connoisseur. Must I remind you, that a single verse of Homer is worth a whole poem of Chœrilus ! For the present I have done, that I may not excite your wrath, as you have roused mine. Great God ! did ever man behold a more egregious piece of folly than this, to judge of a painter and a friend, by the number of figures he puts in a picture !

Reserve, reserve, I beseech you, my friend, these cavilling punctilios for your criticisms on my poetry, and not for my heart, which, with respect to you at least, is without sin ; and if you are angry at this letter, as it affords a specimen of sovereign indignation and freedom of spirit, I must only promise you for the future to flatter you in your absurdities up to your bent.

I salute all the family, and embrace you with all my soul.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, June 6, 1664.

LETTER XIV.

You are very simple to believe that I have applied myself to amassing money, especially in the present times, when every good Christian turns his money often in his pocket before he parts with it. He who has crammed you with this tale either wishes me well, or dreams that I am so. For the first, I thank him; and for the second, I am sorry it is not true. All my riches, my dear Ricciardi, amount to three or four coin, laid by in cotton. Seriously, business is entirely laid aside, owing to the rumours of a war; and, consequently, all my little emoluments, which were drawn from it, are stopped for the present. It is true, I have to the value of a thousand scudi in pictures finished, of which I can sell one now and then with great difficulty. As for commissions, there is not even a dog to order a picture; if the war goes on, I may even plant my pencil in my garden! and this is all my secret of money-making, at your service! However, let those believe me wealthy who will. I go on spoiling a little paper, merely to keep my purse alive; and even on these engravings I am obliged to pay the new tax. My dear friend, all riches should be placed in the mind, and in being contented to sip where others revel in prosperity. If I could sell all my pictures, I would laugh at Cresus; but this will take time.

I am sorry for your bad vintage: in this, your quality of poet is against you.

Farfanicchio salutes you, and talks of you incessantly; and there is nothing so often repeated at our fireside in this season as your name. I beg of you all to love me, and to believe, what I must always repeat, that I have not anything more at heart than your welfare, and so I kiss your hands.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, Jan. 2, 1664 (5?).

LETTER XV.

You are right to put me in mind, when I have need of a remembrancer. I wholly forgot the drawing of Philo-

laus when I was packing up the others, and even had it before my eyes at the time! Pity me; I was half out of my wits on another subject—you shall hear of it another time.

To satisfy you respecting the "*pinxit*" affixed to my engravings, I have done so out of courtesy, and to make it believed, that as I engraved, so I coloured. But the truth is, that from *Attilius* in the great, and Demosthenes and Diogenes *della Scodella* of the middle-sized pieces, none others were coloured by me, and even those were done in whim (as the Giants for instance), merely to show what the colouring was. But on this subject I should have to write you a bible—not *an holy bible*, but a most heterodox one! I do not, however, know that I have acted from the generosity of my soul: I rather think it is my infernal pride. Oh! how much are we obliged to those same Stoics, for having taught us the most efficacious remedy for all human sufferings!

The dedications, Latin and Italian, can be of little use; but I will try to satisfy.

I sent you by last post the licence you asked for: I hope it will arrive safe. Your manner of speaking of the Valteline (would that I were with you!) has filled me with low spirits, by bringing to my mind the divine solitudes of Strozzevolpe! How I hate the sight of every place that is inhabited!

For the relief of my mind, I am meditating a journey. If I am able to realize this scheme, I will tell you: if not, it will vanish with my other castles in the air.

For the rest, command me; and believe that I hold nothing dearer or more precious to my memory and heart than your friendship, and the devotion I owe to my Lucrezia, who, with Agosto, salutes you, as I embrace you most affectionately.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Oct. 11, 1665.

LETTER XVI.

This miscarriage of letters will end some fine day by overturning the little brains I have left. I have, I assure

you, sent five letters before the receipt of yours from Milan, which has taken twelve years off my head; and if it had not arrived, I was on the point of strapping on my wallet and marching off. I might at least have served as an overseer to the works of your new edifice. All this is a reason the more to prove that you have found a treasure; and, as the Neapolitan proverb says,

“Let him who has money, build; and him who has a wind, put to sea.”

But what say you to my sight, which is hourly declining, so that I can scarcely read a letter without holding it at a considerable distance? My head, however, does not otherwise suffer; and I every day feel that the absence of all thought was, and is, of the greatest service to me.

Last week, by special luck, I concluded my bargain of the twenty scudi a month: so that, on that point, I have no further anxiety. All that may now be made will be so much more added. I inform you of this, that (should occasion warrant) you may avail yourself of it.

Yesterday Agosto began to draw his first half-eye. What he may turn out in this line I leave to be inferred from the drawing itself. I salute you, as does Lucrezia, who, by-the-bye, is not in very good health. Here we have Monsieur Poussin nearer to the other world than this; and my dear Signor Giulio Martelli also confined to his bed with a diseased leg, and, what is still worse, with the weight of seventy-three years on his shoulders. Heaven relieve them both, and grant to you all the good you richly merit! Meantime, I esteem and embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, the last day of October, 1665.

LETTER XVII.

The commission of your Signoria with respect to the Padre Cavalli has been duly executed, in conformity with your orders: and now to answer your very minute questions.

In the first place, the “Attilius Regulus” measures in breadth four palms and something more, in length rather

more than two palms and a half. The price I received was a hundred piastres, placed under a Parmesan cheese, sent to me in a box ; and for the aforesaid picture I could since have had a hundred doubloons. Had I the same subject now to paint, I would not take less than four hundred.

For the picture of the "Witches," it measures two braccia and a quarter in breadth, and one and a half in length—perhaps a little more. The original price was fifteen doubloons : it is now twenty years since I painted it. If Signor Rossi would have parted with it, he might frequently have had four hundred scudi down : at one time he had an offer of five hundred ! I have prophesied, that when I shall be no more, it will bring a thousand—death sharpens curiosity with respect to all things. The picture is veiled by a silken curtain. And thus, with my usual fidelity to your commands, I have satisfied your curiosity on these points.

I have not yet painted the "Giants," nor the "Œdipus;" the others are done. It is true, however, that I have some thought of painting those subjects. The Ambassador Priuli, during his residence in Rome, had from me three pictures, the one large and two middle-sized : another (ambassador) from Paris, has bespoke four, with a very small one ; and this I believe is all the information your worship asks. Pray add to this, that nothing French arrives at Rome with any taste for the arts, that does not procure some work of mine. With respect to health, it goes on as tolerably as possible ; but I must keep clear of the cold. As to going to Venice, I am not at all certain it would answer ; and for the present I commend myself to the Destinies. I beg from my soul you will recall me to the Signori Minucci, Signorelli, and Cordini. While I salute you with all the tenderness which I owe you, the Signora Lucrezia and Agosto embrace you with all their hearts.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, December 15, 1666.

LETTER XVIII.

Just as I had believed that this diabolical season had passed away, here we have four days as bad as ever ! The

cold of this year is so unusually severe, that I have more than once thought I should give up the ghost! My head (which in the great heats is quite disordered) in this rigorous cold is so affected, that I sometimes fear I shall drop down *all' improvviso*, and I am ready to bid good night to my wits, with a "to our merry meeting at the pit of Acheron!" I have suffered two months of intense pain in the head, even with all possible attention to my regimen of chicken broth. My feet are two perpetual lumps of ice, with all the benefit to be derived from woollen stockings which I sent for to Venice. In my own apartments the fire is never extinguished; and, more assiduous about my sensations than even the Cavaliere Cicogli was, there is not a crevice in my house that I do not carefully stop up myself, and yet I cannot keep myself warm; nor do I believe that the torch of Love, nor even the caresses of a Phryne, would produce that effect. I talk of anything but my pencil. My canvas lies turned to the wall! and my colours are all, and for ever, dried up! In a word, I think of nothing but chimney-corners, braziers, warming-pans, muffles, woollen gloves, woollen stockings, well-lined caps, and such sort of gear! In fact, dear friend, I find that my wonted ardours are extinct; and what is equally true, is, that I now pass whole days in silence, and that that fire *once* all my own, and which blazed so brightly, has now totally evaporated!

Woe unto me, my friend, if I were now reduced to earn a subsistence by my pencil! I should die in harness, or give up the trade altogether.

If you ask me how I spend my days during the winter months? I answer, when the weather is serene, in wandering forth alone, like a maniac, and visiting all the most solitary places of this region; but when the weather is bad, I shut myself up in the house, pacing my room like one frenzied, or else I take up a book, or listen to the conversation of others rather than talk myself.

Not a week passes in which orders for pictures do not reach me; and to such an extent, that all are now crying out against me. But let them cry; none but the wearer can know where the shoe pinches!

But let us talk of less melancholy matters. I have had our worthy Signor Francesco (who lives in our neighbourhood) with me this morning for two hours. He was occu-

pied in finishing a landscape, and I helped him in many particulars upon this as upon other similar occasions. I desired him to remember, that he has always the privilege of claiming my services since he comes recommended by you.

His manners do not displease me: his vocation in the art is indisputable, provided he applies himself with diligence, and that he is not too easily pleased with what he has done. He salutes you affectionately, and complains that he no longer receives any letters from you, which I also may repeat.

Last week the Signor Cavaliere Fabroni came to me, with the intention of absenting himself (from the amateur theatricals) for this time. He, however, changed his intention, and recited the part of Pasquilla, in some comedies which were acted in the palace of the Lord Constable (di Colonna): he recited *all' improvviso*. We both talked much of you, and of those divine times (now so long passed away) enjoyed on the banks of the Arno!

Pray give me some account of your health.—I do not say of your fortune, which I know to be always the same. Tell me if you are writing any plays? How does the Signor Cosimo?

The Signora Lucrezia and Agosto both desire to unite in offering you their respects.

In the ensuing season, prepare yourself to receive us; I have no longer the patience to defer my visit. Should you want money in the meantime, remember I have always enough for you; and so I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

S. ROSA.

Rome, January 26, 1666.

LETTER XIX.

I write to you on my return from the Valley of Jehoshaphat; that is, after the exhibition of San Giovanni Decolato, for such this festival has been to me this year. A brother of a Pope, with his four sons, have pleased to enter themselves as novices into this company (of San Giovanni); and in order to extinguish all hope, in every one who may

hereafter exhibit his works on the occasion of this festival, they have actually spoliated the finest galleries in Rome of their most superb pictures, for the exhibition ; and particularly the celebrated collection of the Queen of Sweden, which alone were sufficient to intimidate the very devil himself.

The primary motive of their lordships acting in this manner is, simply to exclude the works of all living artists from the exhibition. This intention on their parts was sufficient to determine me on mine, to enter the lists ; and I finally obtained (though not without some trouble), that I alone of all living artists should be permitted to compete with the mighty dead.

I swear to you, my dear friend, that I never was so wound up to any enterprise before ; and as so great an occasion might never again occur for distinguishing myself, I have laid aside every other engagement, that I might start freely for the prize which fame may still have in reserve for me. I now give you to understand (that you may rejoice with me), that I was able to raise my head, even in the midst of all these Achilles of the art of painting. As I know you will desire to learn what were the subjects of my pictures, I inform you, that one was the story of "Saul," taken at that moment when the witch conjures up the spirit of the prophet Samuel to commune with the King. This picture is twelve palms in height and nine in width.

The other (nine palms high and five wide), represented St. George in the act of triumphing over the vanquished dragon ; and these are my excuses, dear friend, that I have not been able to write to you.

For the rest, your embarrassments wound my very soul ; and I shall never cease to repeat to you, that if you want pecuniary assistance, my purse is ever full, when you have occasion to use it, without your thanks being required.

It grieves me to learn that Cesti intends transporting himself to Venice, a place which he ought to shun like the plague, that he may not revive the recollection of those events of which he was the cause. Remember me to Signor Cosimo ; and salute all our friends for me, while I embrace you with all my heart.

Your true friend,

Rome, September 15, 1668.

S. ROSA.

LETTER XX.

Ring out the bells! At last, after thirty years residence in Rome, of hopes blasted and complaints vainly reiterated against men and gods, the occasion is accorded me for giving one altar-piece to the public. The Signor Felippo Nerli (the Pope's *Depositario*), resolved upon vanquishing the obstinacy of my destiny, has endowed a chapel in the church of San Giovanni de' Fiorentini; and in despite of the stars themselves, he has determined that *I* shall paint the altar-piece! It is now five months since I began it, and I had only just laid it aside, with the intention of taking it up after Lent, when the occurrence of the Festa, which the Florentines are obliged to celebrate here, in this church, on the canonization of the Santa Madelena dei Pazzi, obliged me to continue to work at it, and to shut myself up in my house, where for this month and a half I have been suffering agonies, lest I should not have my picture finished in time for their festival. This occupation has kept me secluded, not only from all epistolary commerce, but from every other in the world; and I can truly say, that I have so far forgotten myself, as even to neglect to eat. So arduous, indeed, has been my application, that when I had nearly finished my work, I was obliged to keep my bed for two days; and had not my recovery been assisted by emetics, certain it is that it would have been all over with me, in consequence of some obstruction in the stomach. Pity me, then, dear friend, if, for the glory of my pencil, I have neglected to devote my pen to the service of friendship.

I have now been for two days back occupied on my picture of Saint Turpin: whenever it is finished, you shall be duly informed. In the midst of all this, give me your good wishes! Expect to see us once more; for it is an event I have no longer spirit to defer.

The Signora Lucrezia, who is far from well, and Agosto, who is not much better, desire to salute you, and anxiously

desire to see you. They are still daily occupied in recalling the delightful days passed at Strozzevolpe. Kiss the hands of Signor Fabbretti in my name, while I embrace you with all my soul.

Your true friend,
S. ROSA.

P.S. The Doctor Oliva salutes you.

Rome, 11th October, 1669.

A P P E N D I X.

CANTATA DEL SALVATOR ROSA.

Non à tregua nè fine il duolo mio.
Ricordati Fortuna che son nel mondo,
E son di carne anch' io.
Venne solo alla vita
Per stentar e partir,
Sudar da cane ;
E tra pene infinita
Speme non ho d' assicurarmi un pane.

Per me sol si vede sordo il ciel,
Scuro il sol, secca la terra,
Ov' io di pace ho fede
Colà porta il gran diavolo la guerra..
S' io fo' l' bucato piove ;
S' io metto il piè nel mare,
Il mar s' adira.
Se andasse all' Indie Nove
Non vale il mio testone più d' una lira.

Non vado al macellaro,
Benchè avessi a comprar di carne un grosso,
Che per destino avaro
Non mi pesi la carne al par dell' osso.
S' io vo à palazzo à sorte,
L' anticamera ognor mi mostra a dito ;
I satrapi di corte
Con le lingue mi trinciano il vestito.

Son di fede Cristiano
E mi bisogna credere a l' Ebreo,
Sallo il Ghetto Romano
E il guardaroba mio Ser Mardocheo,
Non à tregua, &c.

S' io son desto, o nel letto
Sempre ho la mente stivalata e varia,
Senz' esser architetto
Fabbrico tutto il dì castelli in aria.
Villa non ho ne stanza,
Altri an d' argento in fin' a l' orinale,
Ricco son di speranza,
E per fede commisso ho l' ospedale.

Ma di grazia osservate,
Quando si sente un caldo dell' inferno,
In mezzo dell' estate
Io marcio col vestito dell' inverno.
Suol dir, chi à da mangiare,
Che i commodi e i quattrini,
Alfin son sogni che dolce minchionare
Haver pari l' entrate a' suoi bisogni.
Oh Dio! son pur pittore,
Nè posso figurarmi un miglior sogno!
Sto sempre d' un colore,
Ne mi riesce mai alcun disegno.
Legni Iberi e Francese,
Col nocchiero pennello a l' onde io spalmo,
Dono ad altri i paesi,
In tempo ch' io non ò di terra un palmo.

Non so che sia Fortuna,
Pago à prezzo di stenti un dì felice;
Non ho sostanza alcuna
E ch' io spero, e ch' io soffro, ognun mi dice.
Credete al vostro Rosa,
Che senza versi e pitture
Il mondo è bello; e la più sana cosa
In questi tempi è non aver cervello.

Ve le dirò più chiare,
Oggi il saper più non si stima un fico.
Da me ciascuno impare
Che assai meglio è morir ch' esser mendico.
Non à tregua, &c. &c. &c.

PICTURES BY SALVATOR ROSA.*

IN ENGLAND.

		<i>In the Possession of</i>
The Two Marys at the Tomb of Christ†	}	Earl Grosvenor.
Portrait of Salvator (by himself) writing poetry‡		Ditto.
Two Views in Romagna		Earl of Miltown.
Glaucus and Scylla		Earl of Derby, Knowsley.
Jacob's Vision	}	Duke of Devonshire. At Chiswick.
Jacob wrestling with the Angel		
A large Landscape, with Soldiers reposing among the Rocks		
A large Landscape		
Xenocrates and Phryne		Earl of Besborough.
Jason and the Dragon§		Honourable W. Ponsonby.
La Fortuna		Duke of Beaufort.

* This catalogue, formed in 1824, chiefly from the collation of different authorities, and from information communicated to the author, can be considered only as a groundwork for future inquiry to those whose interest in the painter may tempt them to seek a closer acquaintance with his works. Unable personally to inspect the many collections noticed, or even by direct application to verify her quotations, she desires not to be held responsible for the *genuineness* of every picture thus attributed to Salvator: while the frequent change of hands to which this species of property is liable, may have led her into some errors in her *references*. Even while the work of collation was going forward, several of Salvator's pictures were sold, and passed to new proprietors.

† Purchased from the late Mr. Agar.

‡ "This portrait of one of the greatest landscape-painters of the Italian School, exhibits him in a character, by which he, in his own time, obtained almost as much celebrity as he did by his pencil. He here represents himself as a poet, and as it were in the very act of writing. There is every reason to suppose that this picture very much resembled him, from the strong marks of individuality in the countenance."—*Description prefixed to the engraving of this portrait, which was purchased by Earl Grosvenor in Italy.*

§ Purchased from the Duke of Chandos by the Earl of Besborough.—It was afterwards sold to Mr. W. Smith, and at his sale to Geo. Watson Taylor, Esq., and it has been (since) purchased by the Honourable W. Ponsonby.

In the Possession of

Two Landscapes ; Forest Scenery } with Banditti	} Earl Cowper.
View of the Bay of Naples	
Belisarius*	Lord Townsend.
Diogenes†	Dowager March. Lansdowne.
Democritus†	Ditto.
Œdipus ; a Child exposed on a } Tree	} * * *
Portrait of Salvator Rosa by } himself ‡	
Tobit and the Angel (in 1816)	Jesse Watts Russell, Esq. M.P.
Mercury and the Woodman	The late B. West, Esq. R.A.
The Death of Regulus	Sir Abraham Hume.
Pythagoras teaching his doctrine } to Fishermen	} Ditto.
An old Head	
Birth of Orion	Ditto.
Mercury and Battus§	Baroness De Grey.
Pythagoras in the Cave	C. H. Tracy, Esq. (in 1821).
A Scene painted on the lid of } Salvator's harpsichord	} Marq. of Abercorn (in 1823).
A Skull and Music Books, on the } same	
Landscape with Banditti	J. Denison, Esq.
Harbour and Shipping	{ Earl of Radnor, Longford Cas- tle, Wilts.
Bacchus on an Altar in a Wood||	
	Earl of Pembroke.

* Given by the celebrated Frederick of Prussia to Mr. Secretary Towns-
end.

† Inscription—"Diogenes, adolescentem manu bibentem intuitus, scyphum
proiecit."—"Democritus omnium derisor in omnium fine designatus."—
These two fine pictures were purchased by the late Marquis of Lansdowne
from Sir — Young, about the year 1806, for a large sum.

‡ On this fine portrait is a little inscription written by Salvator himself,
very illustrative of his ardent feelings :

"Miglior morir con gli amici,
Che viver tra gli nemici."

§ From the Ghigi Palace at Rome.

|| See Passeri's description of this picture ; also "Britton's Beauties of
Wiltshire," vol. i. p. 204.

In the Possession of

Socrates taking Poison	} Fonthill Abbey.
View in Calabria with Soldiers	
Playing Dice*	
Job†	
A Holy Family	} Marquis of Stafford.
Jacob attending his Flock	
The Soothsayers‡	
Soldiers gaming	} In the Collection of the late Sir Francis Bourgeois, now at Dulwich.
Portrait of a Young Man drawing Landscape	
Ditto	
Head of an Old Man	
Saint John preaching in the Wilderness	} Earl of Ashburnham.
Philip baptizing the Eunuch	
Landscape and Figures	
The Fight into Egypt	
Marine View	} Duke of Buckingham.
Ditto	
The Finding of Moses§	} Lord Holland, Holland House, Kensington.
Two Landscapes	
Two Landscapes, with the Sketches of the story of Poly-crates, Tyrant of Samos|| . . . . .	} Earl of Warwick, Warwick Castle.
A desolate and dreary Landscape	
A Landscape of savage sublimity and the most noble repose	
View of rocky Scenery, and a Cataract	

* From the Colonna Palace.

† From the Collection of the Santa Croce Palace at Rome.

‡ "This very exquisitely coloured picture, from the Duc de Praslin's Collection, varies from the generality of works by this master. The scene is tranquil, soft, and delicate. The figures are all placed in easy positions, and the whole is finished with a light flowing pencil. On the foreground are seven figures, three of which are standing upright, the others reclining on the bank of a lake or estuary : the middle part is occupied by water ; and in the background are some lofty crags and mountains, at the foot of which appears a town. In the gallery of T. Hope, Esq, is a duplicate of this picture. It has been engraved in small by Le Bos."—*Britton's Catalogue Raisonné*.

§ Purchased from the Orleans Collection for £2500.

|| Painted (in oil) on paper which has been pasted upon canvas. This must have been one of Salvator's very early productions, when his poverty obliged him to paint on paper, not having the means to purchase better materials.

In the Possession of

Laomedon, King of Troy, detected by Neptune and Apollo	} Late in the possession of D. W. Hunter, Esq. M.D.
A Landscape.—The principal feature of this fine picture is a magnificent shattered tree, under which reposes a group of figures: a lake, castle, and figures in the distant view	} Paul Methuen, Esq. Corsham House.
St. Lawrence on the Gridiron	
A Landscape; Rocky Scenery, deep Fall of Water—a fine group of Banditti in the foreground	
The Travellers	{ William Croftes, Esq. West Harding, Norfolk.
The false Alexander*	* * *
Two Cabinet Landscapes†	— Tunno, Esq. Taplow Lodge.
Two Landscapes	J. Watts Russell, Esq. M.P.
Grand Landscape	{ P. J. Miles, Esq. M.P. Leigh Court, Bristol.
The Roman Augurs	Earl of Derby.
Mountainous Landscape, with River and Figures (the same subject as the <i>Soothsayers</i>)	{ T. Hope, Esq.
Sketch of Jason and the Dragon	Lord Radstock.
The Meeting of Ulysses and Nausicaa	{ Earl Harcourt, Nuneham Courtenay, Oxfordshire.
Jacob's Separation from Laban	{ Earl Waldegrave, Strawberry Hill.
Beggar Boys at Cards	{ Viscount Eardley, Belvedere House, Kent.
A Sea View with Rocks	{ Sir R. Colt Hoare, Bart. Stourhead, Wilts.
Democritus	
The Castle of St. Angelo	
Sea Storm	{ Marquis Hastings, Donnington Hall, Leicestershire.

* From the Ghigi Palace. Under an engraving of this picture by Pietro Barboni, in the author's possession, the title runs thus:—"Il preteso Alessandro, una volta nel Palazzo Ghigi, ora in Londra."

† "Executed in his cheering manner, so happily exemplified in his two Marine Views in the Palace Pitti, in which he seems to excel Vernet."

In the Possession of

Two Landscapes with groups of Figures	} Lord Arundel, of Wardour, Wardour Castle, Wilts.
Two Landscapes, from the Col- lection of Cardinal Guglielmi	
Two large Ditto	
Two spirited Sketches — Christ bearing the Cross, and a Cru- cifixion	
Head of a Hermit contemplating a Skull	

PICTURES BY SALVATOR ROSA

IN THE

CONTINENTAL COLLECTIONS.

The Prodigal Son*	At Petersburg.
Two Landscapes	{ Collection of M. Danoit, at Brussels.
Tobias and Azarias†	
St. Francis in the Desert	(Late in) Paris.
	{ Kiel, in Holstein: Gallery Schmidt.
Landscapes and Figure Pieces	
Saul and the Witch of Endor‡	Paris, Royal Museum.
Grand Battle-piece	Ditto, ditto.
Great Landscape with many Fi- gures	{ Dusseldorf. (Electors Pala- tine.)

* From the Houghton Collection.

† There were several pictures of S. Rosa in the Hotel de Mazarin, now dispersed.—See *Entretiens sur les Vies et sur les Ouvrages des plus célèbres Peintres. Par M. Felibien.*‡ “A most capital picture by Salvator is at Versailles, of which the subject is Saul and the Witch of Endor; and that singular performance displays the merits of the painter in the strongest point of light. The attitude of Saul is majestic; while the expression in his countenance is a judicious mixture of anxiety of heart and eagerness for information. It is also observed, by good judges, that there is a dignity in the character of the Witch. But it is a kind of dignity very different from that of the monarch; it is enthusiasm. In the whole there is a wonderful spirit, and with that spirit, a freedom of pencil that very few have equalled.”—*Pilkington's Dictionary.*

IN ROME.

St. John preaching to a Group of Persons	} Colonna Palace.
St. John in the Desert	Ditto.
Two Small Views	Corsini Palace.
The Prometheus	Ditto.
Two Views—Rocks and Water .	Palace Spada.
Two Landscapes	Ditto.
Magnificent Marine View . . .	Rospigliosi Palace.
St. Girolamo in the Desert . .	Barberini Palace.
Altar-piece in the Church of San Giovanni de' Fiorentini . . . }	
Belisarius, with magnificent Sce- nery	} Casa Doria (a duplicate?)
Cain and Abel	Casa Dorio (<i>Vasi</i>).
Marine View	} In the Collection of Signor
Portrait of a Warrior }	Camuccini.
Philosopher and Satyr (the for- mer a Portrait of Salvator Rosa)	} Ghigi Palace.
A Sorceress	Ditto.
A Witch*	Gallery of the Campidoglio.
A Group of Armed Men	Ditto.
Landscape of River Scenery with a Group of Figures }	Late in the gallery of Signor
	Giovanni Maldura.
Marine View—with the Miracle of the Money found in the Fish	} Lately purchased by Lord Mil- town.

* "Unless some pains be taken to preserve this picture, which is in a sad plight, it must soon crumble into dust."—*Private Letter from Rome to the Author.*

This picture, so historically interesting, supposing it to be the Witch of the Rossi Gallery, exhibits a withered, half-naked hag, seated—her foot placed on a paper on which some astrological figures are placed, with a circle traced round its verge—with equidistant tapers lighted round it. The hair of this weird sister is dishevelled, and her wild eyes are bent fixedly on a book which lies open on her knee. This work has suffered so much from time and neglect, that it is difficult to ascertain all that original merit which induced Carlo Rossi to veil it with a silken curtain; the background, and some of the accompaniments, are almost obliterated; even the expression of the countenance may only be guessed at. His other "Strigonerie," or Witcheries, of which he was so fond, have all disappeared from Rome. There are doubts entertained as to the authenticity of the *Maga* in the Ghigi Palace.

Four Pictures in the Chapel di Monte Santo, placed there by Carlo Rossi	} Lately purchased by His R.H. Prince Leopold, of Naples.
Portrait of Masaniello	Gallery of Cardinal Fesch.

FLORENCE.

A Landscape a little blackened by time, with three Figures draped in white	} Royal Gallery.
The Leucadian Leap, painted on wood, in Chiaro-scuro	}
Wood Scenery, with an Old Man seated	}
A magnificent Landscape, fore- ground of Rocks, and Water flowing round them	}
Portrait of Salvator Rosa, by himself*	}
A Philosopher showing a Mask to a Man	}
Great Battle-piece	Pitti Palace.
Two Superb Sea Views, with large Vessels afloat	} Pitti Palace.
St. Anthony's Temptations	
Justice, banished from Heaven, takes refuge with some Pea- sants upon Earth	}
Fear †	

* "Le portrait moral de Salvator Rosa est tracé dans le tableau qui fait le sujet de cet article. Le peintre y a fait passer son génie brûlant, l'esprit satyrique dont il était animé, et le feu céleste qui échauffe tous ses ouvrages."
—*Galerie de Florence*, tom. ii. *Paris*, 1789.

† L'Effroi.—*Tableau de Salvator Rosa*.

Le grand art du poëte, du peintre, est de faire penser; de n'indiquer au spectateur, au lecteur, que le commencement d'une action, afin que leur imagination, toujours active, lui donne son complément. Salvator Rosa a suivi fidèlement ce principe dans l'Effroi. Deux philosophes errent dans la campagne. Le charme de leurs graves entretiens leur a fait quitter les chemins battus. Ils veulent enfin les rejoindre, et suivre un sentier qui s'offre à leur vue. Mais un laboureur survient; ses traits et sa voix altérés annoncent aux philosophes qu'ils courraient de grands dangers, s'ils prenaient cette route détournée. Salvator Rosa aimait à traiter des sujets de terreur; et il y excellait. Celui-ci en est une belle preuve. On admire dans le ciel une brillante touche, et une savante distribution des nuages. Le coloris est vrai, et mérite au peintre une place distinguée parmi les paysagistes.—*Galerie de Florence*, 1789.

Peace crowned with Olives, be- tween a Dove and a Lamb	}	
Democritus among the Tombs	.	
Jonas preaching at Nineveh	.	
Fall of the Giants	.	
Hagar in the Desert	.	
Mercury and the Peasant	.	
Tityus preyed on by a Vulture	*	
The Catiline Conspiracy	.	{ Casa Martelli. (Now in the Pitti.)
Two Fine Landscapes	.	Casa Caponi.

GENOA.

A great Picture representing Christ chasing the Traders out of the Temple †	}	Cataneo Palace.
Jeremiah restored to Liberty	.	
Pythagoras	.	
A Fire ‡	.	Balbi Palace.

NAPLES.

Landscapes	.	.	.	.	{ Gallery of the Archbishop of Tarentum.
Saint Nicholas de' Bari	.	.	.	.	{ Church of San Martino (Char- treuse).

MILAN.

Assumption of the Virgin Mary	.	Chiesa della Vittoria.
The Purgatory	.	Gallery of the Brera.

* In the Galerie de Florence (in which is a fine engraving of this picture) the Prometheus or the Tityus is given among the pictures then in Florence, of Salvator Rosa's. I am ignorant if this is a duplicate, or the original picture bearing that name, in the Corsini Gallery at Rome. Some doubts are entertained at present of its being Rosa's.

† "Le Seigneur, qui chasse les vendeurs du Temple, en figures et grandeur naturelles, très beau et très rare chef-d'œuvre du célèbre Salvator Rosa."—*Galerie de Florence*.

‡ "Sur la grande porte, une Incendie, *style de Salvator Rosa*," says the French catalogue of the galleries of Genoa.

ETCHINGS BY SALVATOR ROSA.*

One volume of Military Dresses of various epochs—Banditti; figures and other *capricci*. Sixty pages, the title-leaf included. Seven pieces (including the Apollo, the Glaucus, and two Saint Williams).

Six friezes containing Tritons and Naiads, &c.

Seven pieces, including Alexander and Apelles, Diogenes, Plato, Democritus, and some allegorical subjects.

Four pieces of different sizes, including Polycrates, Regulus,† Cædipus, and the Fall of the Giants.†

Jason charming the Dragon.

Diogenes flinging away his Cup.

The Genius of Salvator Rosa, an allegory. Apollo and Nymphs, &c. &c. making in all eighty-four engravings.

The original plates, nearly worn out, were sold by the present family (descendants of Rosa) to the Roman Government for 1000 dollars; and are now in the Papal Chalcographic Office.‡

His Monogram is marked by an S and an R united. He also occasionally inscribed his name thus—S. ROSA.§

SR Un S entrelacé dans un R denote *Silvestre Ravenas et Salvator Rosa*, comme je l'ai dit ci-dessus dans R et S.

Dictionnaire des Monogrammes, Lettres Initiales, Logogryphes, Rebus, &c.; traduit de l'Allemand. Paris, 1762, pp. 272, 359.

ENGRAVINGS

AFTER THE MANNER OF SALVATOR ROSA, AND FROM HIS PICTURES.

The Catiline Conspiracy, by Rainaldi and Denon.†

St. John preaching in the Wilderness, by Brown.

Belisarius, by Strange.

Two Landscapes, by Volpato.

Two great *Clair-obscur*s, by A. Pond.

A large Allegorical piece, by Laurent.

Several pieces engraved at Vienna, by A. J. Prenne, in the Cabinet of the Emperor.‖

* Pascoli says of S. Rosa, that he was "Bravissimo intagliatore in acqua-forte, ed intagliò molte opere sue."

† In the possession of Lady Morgan.

‡ "Salvator left about ninety etchings executed in a spirited and masterly manner: they are distinguished by an intelligent management of the chiaro-scuro, and there is uncommon vivacity and expression in the heads."—See *Bryan's Dictionary*, article "Rosa."

§ Copies were however, it is said, piratically executed by a living artist of considerable merit.

‖ See "Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres," tom. i.

Landscape with Rocky Mountains and Soldiers	} J. Ossenbeck.
Abraham and Hagar	Ravenet.
Prodigal Son	Ditto.
Good Samaritan	Plasteels.
Diogenes and the Peasant	W. C. Edwards.
Fable of the Bundle of Sticks	Isaac Taylor.
Jason	Boydell.
Jacob wrestling with the Angel	} Earlom.
David and Goliath	
Soldiers—from the Houghton Collection	
Head of the Prodigal Son	
Tobit catching the Fish	G. Smith.
Xenocrates and Phryne	Grignon.
The Eunuch baptized	} Goupy.
St. John preaching in the Wilder- ness	
A Book of 7 sheets, containing :	} Goupy.
The Soothsayers	
Tobit (from Sir P. Methuen's Collection)	
Robbers (from Mr. Richardson's) Jacob's Vision (from the Duke of Devonshire's)	
Glaucus and Scylla (from Lord Derby's)	
Sea Monster (from Duke of Rut- land's)	
Glaucus and Scylla	Winstanley.
Banditti in a Desert	Ditto.
Hagar and Ishmael	Ditto.
Temptation of Christ (Lord Cal- ton's Collection)	T. Phillips.

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